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OUTLINES  
OF  
MORAL PHILOSOPHY



# OUTLINES OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY

DESIGNED TO BE ADAPTED TO THE SYLLABUS IN  
ETHICS FIXED FOR THE B. A. EXAMINATION  
OF THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY.

BY

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To

The Sacred Memory

Of

MY MOTHER

Whose Indefatigable Affection And Zeal

Cared Me Safely on My Way

To

The Temple of Learning

This Volume

Is Most Respectfully Dedicated.

•





## PREFACE.

This text in ethics is intended especially for meeting the wants of the students preparing for the B. A. Examination in ethics of the Calcutta University. Since the discontinuance of the old practice of prescribing fixed text books, and the introduction of a new method which requires the students to learn the subjects defined in the syllabus by reference to a number of books recommended for the purpose by the Syndicate from year to year, they have invariably been found, as far as my experience goes, to feel a good deal of difficulty in learning the subjects so defined. The reasons are obvious : firstly, the books recommended are numerous besides being bulky ; secondly, the subjects to be studied, far from being elementary, are unsuitable for the capacity of the beginners ; thirdly, the time allowed to learn them is insufficient. As a teacher of philosophy for over eighteen years, I have always found the students of my classes in helpless condition. For a long time, therefore, I have been feeling the need of such suitable books as will give them considerable relief and at the same time, much assistance. Some attempts have been made recently in that direction. "An Elementary Course of Ethics" written by the late Professors Wilson and Wheeler, "The Elements of Moral Philosophy" by the late Professor Mohit Chunder Sen, and "The elements of Morals" by Professor Ambika

Charan Mitter, are attempts of that kind. The present treatise is the fourth attempt. And the apology for its publication is that there are important differences between the latter and the three former : I have written from the *idealistic* standpoint in respect of which I agree with the second writer but differ from the first and the third whose standpoints are *intuitionistic* ; moreover, although both of the first two treatises are excellently written, they are too sketchy to be of much use to the students, while the third one has the opposite fault. But it should be admitted that did I not write from a different standpoint from that of the third writer this volume would never see the light.

Though I have adapted this text to the syllabus, I have changed the arrangement of the topics defined therein in order to connect them as parts of a system. If it is true that ethics is a science, the topics with which it deals cannot be entirely unconnected, but must be integral parts of a connected whole. I have treated them from that standpoint. Writing from the viewpoint of *Ideal-realism* as expounded by Vedantism and Hegelianism I have accepted the view that the real standpoint of morality should be that which takes into account and explains all the sides of human nature, and is, therefore, the perfection of that nature ; I have, consequently, tried to show that all other forms on the moral standpoint are based upon the one-sided conceptions of the self, each of which conceptions revokes its opposite by the inherent necessity of its nature, and is, therefore, a step in the process of a dialectic which finally leads to a conception that reconciles them all

and unifies them into a system of which they are only partial forms. In as far as other auxiliary topics are concerned, I have treated them also from the same standpoint. So that the whole treatise will appear to a careful and intelligent reader as a systematic whole.

As I have said before, my object has mainly been to provide the students with such a suitable comprehensive treatise on ethics as will aid them considerably in learning the long list of subjects defined in the syllabus without perusing a large number of books within a short time and with the aid of the intelligence of the beginners like themselves. But, yet, I have tried my best to discourage cramming, and with that object in view, I have discussed all the sides of a topic, and thus, have tried to give the students as comprehensive a view of it as the space of this book permits. For these reasons I have been led to subject the theories of other writers to a critical examination in order to arrive at a view more sound and less dogmatic. Again, remembering that this text is intended especially for the use of the beginners, I have spared no pains to make my meaning as clear and my language as plain, as possible. I am confident that the students of ethics will feel no difficulty in reading this book intelligently without the help of a teacher.

Writing, as I have said before, from the standpoint of Vedantism and Hegelianism I have thought it desirable in some places to give the ethical views of the Hindu sages as expounded especially in the Upanishads, Sankhya, and Bhagabatgita. But in order to avoid complication I have stated them as briefly as possible.

A few words which I have used in this treatise call for an explanation. "Eudæmonism" has been used in the Aristotelian sense and therefore carefully distinguished from Hedonism as ordinarily understood ; I have classed it with Perfectionism which is particularly the theory of Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians : Dr. Paulen's theory of Energism seems to me to belong to the same class. It is needless to say that Perfectionism, Eudæmonism or Energism is the only ethical doctrine which I have thought sound and accordingly accepted as my own view. Some other words which call for explanations are "individuality" and "personality." The former has been used to indicate the *sentient* side of a man by virtue of which he is a particular distinct being or animal, and the latter to indicate his concrete nature which is constituted by his individuality as controlled by his reason, the universal side of his nature.

For the sake of convenience this treatise has been divided into three books : in the first book some preliminary topics and the psychological elements of ethics have been considered ; in the second, the different forms of the moral standard, and some other auxiliary topics have been examined and discussed ; in the third, an attempt has been made to explain the facts of the concrete moral life by the application of the principles arrived at in the preceding two books. So that the first two books deal with the ethical theories, while the third, with the facts of the concrete moral life. In the appendix I have inserted the B. A. Examination Papers, on ethics, of the Calcutta University from the year 1909 to the year 1915, and have also pointed out the pages

of this book where the answers of the questions may be found. My objects in doing so has been to help the students in determining the nature of the answer required by each question, which the great majority of them usually feel considerable difficulty in ascertaining for themselves.

I have spared no pains to make the treatise as complete and interesting as lies in my power ; but as I had to write it during a period of indifferent health, I could not make it such as I desired : consequently, some portions have remained incomplete, and the treatment of some of the topics has not been as satisfactory as was desired. The peculiar way of marking the pages calls for an explanation here : as this text was originally intended for the use of the students of my own classes only, I had to print the second book first ; for this reason, the marking of the pages, though continuous in each book, is not continuous throughout the whole treatise.

Before I close I think it my duty to acknowledge that I have received considerable assistance from the writings of such eminent ethical writers as Profs. T. H. Green, E. Caird, B. Bosanquet, J. S. Mackenzie, J. Seth, J. H. Muirhead, J. Dewey, W. R. Sorley, and Dr. F. Paulsen, who have written also from the idealistic standpoint. But, though in many places I have freely quoted from their writings, I have not refrained from criticising and rejecting their views when I have thought them unreasonable.

KRISHNATH COLLEGE,  
BERHAMPORE.  
*July 1915.*

} A. K. MAZUMDAR



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# CORRECTIONS.

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<i>Page.</i>	<i>Line.</i>	<i>For.</i>	<i>Read.</i>
1	6	latin	Latin
1	6	the another	another
3	24	in	is
4	18	resons	reasons
27	14	what is his <i>ultimate end and function</i> are in the system,	what are his <i>ultimate end and function</i> in the system?
27	18	whah	what
32	9	'aught'	'ought'
49	31	defore	before
51	20	Natnre	Nature
53	19	Aestheticc-motor	Æstheticō-motor
54	18	indispensably necessary	necessary
72	21	subserves	subserve
77	6	other-emotions	other emotions
111	6	affect	affects
125	27	we	We
138	10	intutions	intuitions
142	9	has	has not
147	14	travellers	travellers
153	28	prof	proof

## BOOK II.

1	29	mojority	majority
3	2	casuitry	casuistry
6	7	intectual	intellectual
9	11	actiou	action
12	7	morder	murder



<i>Page.</i>	<i>Line.</i>	<i>For.</i>	<i>Read.</i>
12	19	which	it
16	9	elements	element
16	13	liberty	liberty
19	9	Knowingly	knowingly
19	20	self-consistency	self-inconsistency
23	2	Desires	Desires
50	1	may	might
56	21	utilitarianism	utilitarianism
61	26	Epicurian	Epicurean
62	27	superier	superior
62	28	Epicurian	Epicurean
92	18	from	form
95	26	Ethies	Ethics
96	16	bemome	become
96	22	Ettics	Ethics
96	27	the	The
120	14	prominet	prominent
156	12	"aught"	"ought"
165	19	but	and
182	28	<i>non moral</i>	<i>non-moral</i>
191	26	without	instead of
200	17	will be	has been
200	18	shall consider	have considered
200	19	Book II	this Book

## BOOK III.

5	4	Basanquet	Bosanquet
58	19	follow	follows
65	27	possively	possibly
70	4	argument	arguments
73	4	god	God
77	6	thoughts.	words ; in the second place, it means that <i>our</i> <i>words should conform</i> <i>to our thoughts.</i>

<i>Page.</i>	<i>Line.</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
87	13	are	is
88	28	doing evil	doing no evil
102	13	by his supplied	supplied by his
103	27	feinitely	definitely
119	30	(B)	(B)
126	10,16,20	aesthetic	æsthetic
137	22	answer,	answer.
140	22	Loveis •	•Love is
211	9	perview	purview
211	31	duties respect,	duties, respect
227	29	defend	defends
231	14	Rewardablenees	Rewardableness
240	11	universitys	university
244	7	t	it
261	26	sensibility ?—	sensibility.
261	27	is	is,
269	28	to the spiritual or gentler virtues,	to the gradual subordination of the physical or sterner virtues to the spiritual or gentler virtues,
273	25	as not	not
275	31	cla	class



## BOOK I.

### CHAPTER I.

#### Definition, province and end of Ethics.

(1) **Definition of Ethics** :—Ethics has been variously defined. But its etymology will help us considerably in arriving at its true definition. The word "*ethics*" is derived from the Greek adjective "*ethica*" which comes from the substantive "*ethos*" meaning manners and customs of people. The corresponding latin substantive is "*mores*" from which Moral Philosophy, the another name for "*ethics*" is derived. Hence from its etymology the word, "*ethics*" may be taken to mean an inquiry into and a comparison of the manners and customs of the different peoples, and thus to be a branch of Sociology or the study of the different forms of society, the ways in which they grow up, and the conditions on which their permanence depends.

Now the word "*ethics*" may, indeed, be used in this sense, i. e. to include, within its scope, an account of the manners and customs of different races ; but it is commonly distinguished from Sociology, and used in a narrower sense. Manners and customs are habits of actions ; and in the case of human beings, they are habits of free rational voluntary actions ; men universally judge their own and other people's actions as good or bad, right or wrong ; and as men's voluntary actions

spring out of their character, they judge their character also as good or bad according to their actions. And they universally admit not only that certain forms of actions are right and others wrong, but also that they are subject to a duty or under an obligation to do those that are right, and avoid those that are wrong ; and that they have good or ill desert, ( i. e. deserve approval or disapproval, reward or punishment, which is expressed sometimes by saying that they are responsible ) according as they do what is right or what is wrong. In this way Ethics, in the narrower sense in which it is now commonly used, comes to deal wholly with the round-about ideas of *right and wrong, duty or obligation, good and ill desert, or responsibility, &c.* But as the ideas of right and wrong are more essential and fundamental, because all other ideas arise out of them, Ethics is held to be directly and immediately concerned with the former.

Hence we may define Ethics as *the scientific inquiry which attempts to determine precisely what is good or bad, right or wrong in the voluntary actions of human beings, and why they are so, and thereby to guide them as to how they should act under various circumstances.* Or to express the definition in another way : as the voluntary actions of men spring out of their character, and are good or bad according as their character is good or bad, the problem of Ethics may be said to be *to determine scientifically what is good or bad in character of men* ( Martineau ) ; or as we always act in order to accomplish something, i. e. to realise the idea of some end or

object, our actions are always means towards ends, and they are good or bad according as their ends are good or bad. Ethics may, therefore, be defined *as an attempt to determine scientifically what is good or bad in our possible ends or objects of actions, so as to guide men to act for those ends which are ultimately the best.* ( Profs. Mackenzie, Muirhead, &c. )

Thus we get three definitions of Ethics : (a) It is the science of conduct ; (b) it is the doctrine of human character ; and (c) it is the "science of the ultimate end or ideal of human life". But they are not really distinct ; they are three forms of the same definition. For, as we have found, every rational action contains three elements or aspects : (i) the action itself, (ii) the inclination, disposition, character out of which it springs, and (iii) the ultimate end or object at which it aims ; and the investigation into the goodness or badness of each which leads to one or other of the above definitions, is bound up with that into the goodness or badness of the rest, and thus whichever of the above statements we adopt of the problems of ethics, we really mean much the same thing.

The full definition of Ethics comes, then, to be this : *Ethics is a science which inquires into conduct in order to find out the best type of character in accordance with which it should always be moulded ; and the best type of character being the best habit of will it seeks also to find out the supreme end of life towards which such habit of will is constantly directed.*

Now, to clearly understand the meaning of the above

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definition it is necessary to clearly understand the meaning of the terms "conduct", "character" and "science".

(a) **Conduct** :—Conduct is defined by H. Spencer as "acts adjusted to ends, or else—the adjustment of acts to ends". According to this definition conduct includes all acts whether their ends are *consciously conceived* or not, i. e. it includes not only those actions which are strictly purposeful or performed from motive, but also those which are non-purposeful, such as the mechanical, random, reflex and instinctive actions. But Ethics has nothing to do with the latter class of action, because they are *unmoral* i. e. have no moral worth. We do not pass moral judgment upon the actions of the lower animals or the blind agencies of nature. We do not say that the devastations of the storm, or the ravages of the lower animals are wrong ; or the effects of rains upon the crops are right. The reasons are that though these acts are, no doubt, adjusted to ends, they are not adjusted to ends by the doers of these acts ; i. e. these acts are not performed in order to realise ends consciously and voluntarily conceived by those agents which therefore cannot be held accountable for the consequences. The moral judgment is, thus, strictly confined to *human actions*, and only to those human actions which are strictly *purposeful* or *voluntary*. For instance, breathing, sneezing, &c. are also human actions ; but we do not say that they are right or wrong. So that all automatic, random, reflex and instinctive actions should be excluded from conduct which is the proper object of the

moral judgment. We may, therefore, define conduct as the *strictly voluntary action*, i. e. action which is willed or performed with a view to the attainment of a preconceived end. This definition of conduct should also exclude those actions which are performed under *external compulsion*, and are not therefore voluntary.

Now, there are some apparent exceptions to this definition. In the first place, we usually pass moral judgment upon *habits* or habitual actions. We say some habits are good, some are bad. How is it justifiable, if the voluntary actions are the precise object of the moral judgment? The answer is, though the habitual actions are not strictly voluntary, yet we are accountable for them, because we have acquired them *voluntarily*, i. e. through a series of voluntary actions, and we ought to have checked them before they grew inveterate. In the second place, we do not usually pass moral judgment upon the activities of the artisans while at work, or upon those of the artists, scientists and experimentalists, even although they are voluntary. The answer is, the very distinction between this class of voluntary actions and the other class is arbitrary. These actions are as moral as any other voluntary actions. A duty is attached to every kind of voluntary action; and every man, whatever may be his vocation, is bound to act properly. As Prof. Muirhead has truly observed; "An artisan or an artist or a writer who does not "do his best" is not only an inferior workman, but a bad man." (See also Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book III, Chap. V). Thus conduct does not embrace merely a part of our voluntary



life ; it is not "three-fourths of life" as Mathew Arnold observed, but the whole of life in so far as it is voluntary.

(b) **Character** :—Character is ordinarily defined as that which is constituted by "settled habits of will", i. e. settled habits of actions acquired by a series of voluntary acts. Thus character is nothing but a system of tendencies or dispositions to actions voluntarily acquired. Every man has a certain type of character and his conduct is the expression of his character in activity. And a conduct which is not such expression is not conduct at all, because it has then no moral significance, and a man cannot therefore be held responsible for it. Hence, at least from the point of view of morality conduct has no meaning when divested of its relation to character. Character and conduct are inseparable. ( For fuller discussion of this point, see Book II, Cha. II ).

Thus we can define conduct more fully in this way : *conduct is action voluntarily performed to realise the idea of a preconceived end or object in view that is in agreement with the character of the agent.* Hence when we say that Ethics inquires into conduct, what we really mean to say is that Ethics seeks to determine the *supreme end* at which all conduct should be aimed, or the *best type of character* from which all conduct should issue in order to attain the supreme end.

(c) **Science** :—Some, as H. Spencer, Sir, L. Stephen, &c. would call Ethics a science in its usual sense ; while some others as Prof. H. W. Williams would call it a philosophy ; some others again, as Profs. Mackenzie, Muirhead, J. Seth &c. would call it a science in a special

sense. It is, therefore, necessary to investigate the true meaning of the term "science" in which it is applied to Ethics. Conduct has two sides, *physical* and *ethical*. It is an event taking place at a particular time and in a particular place ; besides it has physiological and psychological conditions : all these constitute its physical side. It has also another side; it has *moral value*—it is right or wrong, good or bad. This is its ethical side. Now, "science" is commonly defined as an inquiry into the causes of phenomena ; and J. S. Mill and Dr. Bain in their logic define scientific explanation as consisting in stating the causes, or the causes of the causes out of which phenomena flow. If we accept this definition of science, then Ethics would be a science in so far as it investigates the physical side of conduct only, i. e. its origin and development. In this sense H. Spencer, Sir, L. Stephen and their followers regard Ethics as a science. But Ethics, as commonly understood, has nothing to do with the inquiry into the *causes* of conduct, though it deals with conduct. And indeed those who uphold the doctrine of the freedom of the will emphatically deny that *conduct or voluntary action is caused at all*, at least in the sense in which physical events are said to be caused. Hence Ethics will not be a science in the above sense.

But the above sense of science is certainly too narrow, making it deal only with causes and effects, i. e. succession of phenomena ; for this will exclude all the branches of mathematics which have nothing to do with the succession of phenomena ( i. e. causes and effects ), but deal with co-existent properties. ( for instance those of

triangle or circle ) which are not successive events ; and Geometry, for instance, gives no *causes* of successive events, but *grounds* or *reasons* for co-existent properties. Hence there are not only *laws of succession* ( i. e. causal laws ) but also *laws of co-existence*, or reasons for co-existent facts ; and there is not only a science of successive events, but also of co-existent facts, such, for instance, as mathematics. Now, Ethics is a science of the latter kind ; it attempts to determine, not the *causes* of conduct, but the *reasons* why one conduct is right or good, and another is wrong or bad, and thereby demonstrates that the former is *better* than the latter ; and in doing so it investigates the supreme end, or the best type of character as the “norm” or the ideal or the standard by reference to which we can determine the rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness of conduct. Or in other words, Ethics is primarily concerned, not with the “judgments, of facts”, i. e. judgments in their logical sense of propositions, but with the “judgments upon facts” i. e. judgments in the judicial sense of sentence. We must distinguish between judgments as to what things *are* and judgments as to what they *ought to be*. The statement “fire burns” is a judgment in the former sense, and the statement “this conduct is right or wrong, good or bad” is a judgment in the latter sense. This distinction, therefore, puts, on one side, sciences which are concerned with facts or actual occurrences which have to be analysed, classified and explained ; and on the other side, sciences which deal with judgments *upon* these facts, i. e. with these facts from the standpoint of their *value* or *vali-*

*dily*. Ethics belongs to the latter class. It is, therefore, called a *normative* or *regulative* science.

Though, thus, Ethics is a science, yet it is a science which approaches philosophy more than any other science. Every other science deals only with some limited portion of our experience, or some limited part or department of nature in so far as it can be experienced ; but Ethics is concerned with the whole of our experience from a particular point of view, i. e. from the point of view of the ideal by reference to which its rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness is determined. ( See above—(a) ). In a sense, therefore, Ethics is not a science at all, if by science is meant merely the study of some limited department of human experience. It is rather *a part of philosophy* which studies experience as a whole, or the nature, as experienced, as a whole. It is, yet, only *a part*, its province being narrower than that of philosophy. Philosophy deals with human nature as a whole, besides dealing with the world of matter, and God, and attempts to find out their mutual relations. But Ethics is mainly concerned with the whole of human nature in so far as it is *moral*, i. e. progressing towards a moral ideal, and has nothing to do with the world of matter. Ethics is, therefore, *more philosophical than scientific*, although it may be called a science in so far as its function includes also the organisation and interpretation of the moral phenomena. (See Prof. Mackenzie's *Manual of Ethics*, p. 21, § 8 ; Prof. Muirhead's *Elements of Ethics*, pp. 32-36 and Prof. J. Seth's *A Study of Ethical Principles*, pp. 24-39).

(2) **Science and Art** :—Now, an important question suggests itself : Is Ethics a science, or an art, or both at the same time ? Or in other words, is the function of Ethics wholly theoretical, i. e. simply to investigate the ideal of the moral life or practice, or wholly practical, i. e. simply to find out means or rules whereby to guide people to mould and organise their moral life, or both at the same time ? The real answer to these questions rests upon the understanding of the relation between science and art—theory and practice. It is generally supposed that all sciences are *theoretical* inasmuch as they inquire into the nature of some particular departments of things, i. e. what things are and how they are constituted ; while art is *practical*, inasmuch as it teaches us how to produce something. Thus “a science teaches us *to know* and an art *to do*.” But there seems to be no sufficient ground for such distinction. For, in explaining how certain things are constituted every science thereby explains how they may be produced, or how they may be made better than what they are ; and in this sense it is *practical*. For these reasons every science is both *theoretical* and *practical* at the same time. Thus even *astronomical knowledge* has important practical applications to the measurement of time, navigation, &c. In this way every science leads to an art or arts, and every art is connected with a science or sciences. But such relationship between a positive science and its corresponding art is somewhat indirect. The dependence of an art upon its corresponding normative science is of a closer nature. A normative

science is said to teach us *to know how to do*. It gives us knowledge of the ultimate nature of an ideal, and teaches us, at the same time, how that ideal can be gradually realised or attained in and through our actual moral life or practice. Thus the science of rhetoric leads directly to the art of rhetoric, and the science of fencing to the art of fencing; and if these sciences could be sufficiently worked out in all their details, perhaps the corresponding arts would be found to contain nothing which was not included in them. But, yet, in no case a science and its corresponding art are identical; an art always contains an element in the form of a peculiar knack or dexterity which no science can teach. Hence a science and its corresponding art are distinct, though related to each other. Being a normative science Ethics has this dual character; it is theoretical and practical—a science and an art at the same time. The moral theory and the moral practice are inseparable. As Prof. James Seth has truly observed: “on the other hand, as it is impossible to separate practice from theory, so it is impossible to separate theory from practice. As Aristotle insisted, the abiding interest of the moral philosopher is practical, as well as theoretical.” Yet, we should not identify one with another. The science of Ethics is not exactly the same thing as the art of Ethics. “Morality is undoubtedly, in a sense, a fine art, requiring as rare gifts for its perfection as any of the others.” The prophets are not lesser artists than the poets or the musicians. “To hit the right act in complicated cases requires as finely cultivated a tact as it does to hit the right word

or sound.....The art of good conduct, and the art of the production of good conduct, both defy science. The moral genius acts nobly ; and the prophetic genius moves men to noble activity : and no one can tell how it is that the actions of the one fall out so beautifully, or that the words of the other rouse us to virtue like the sound of a trumpet. Christ lived ; Paul and Ruskin preached. In these facts the art of Ethics is involved, and no science can cope with them. Nevertheless, a science of Ethics is possible. It is possible to lay down broad general laws, which must underlie the teaching of every true prophet and the conduct of every true moral genius." ( Prof. Mackenzie, *Manual of Ethics*, pp, 9-10 ).

**(3) The province or scope of Ethics :—**By the province or scope of Ethics is meant the *field* or the *range* of subjects which is included in it. This may be deduced from the definition of Ethics as given above, and stated and divided in the following way :—

(a) In the first place, Ethics "has a double function to perform : to determine the end of life, or the highest good, and point out the way, or the means, of realizing it." ( Prof. Paulsen ). The former is the *theoretical* but *primary* business of Ethics, and belongs to that part of it which is called *the doctrine of goods* ; it consists in finding out and establishing the goal or the supreme good which is the perfection or consummation of life. The latter is the *practical* and *secondary* business and belongs to that part of Ethics which is called *the doctrine of duties and virtues* ; it consists in showing "by what inner qualities and modes of conduct the highest good

or the perfect life is attained and realized," i. e. in laying out "a scheme of concrete duties and virtues" which is deducible from the conception of the highest good. This latter function includes also the organisation and interpretation of other moral facts by reference to the idea of the supreme good.

(b) ~~Those~~ ~~are the direct functions of Ethics.~~ There are also some *indirect* functions. In going to establish the goal or the supreme good of life, Ethics has indirectly to deal with some problems which arise out of the different standpoints from which we can study life, i. e. certain problems which are psychological, philosophical, sociological or political in nature. Thus a study of life from psychological standpoint gives rise to such problems as the analysis and relation of Desire, Will, Character and Conduct, and the freedom of the will ; from the *philosophical*, to the theory of the self, its position and function in the world system, immortality of the soul, &c. ; from the *sociological*, to the relation of individual to society ; and lastly, from the *political*, to the relation of the individual to the state ; all of which have important bearing upon the central problems of Ethics.

(4) **The end of Ethics** :—The *end* or *object* of Ethics is not, at least directly, to make man *moral*, just as it is not the aim of Logic to make man *rational*, or that of Theology to make man *pious*. The germs or the latent capacities of morality, reasoning and piety are ingrained in the nature of man from the very beginning. As a man can be a good reasoner and a powerful debator without reading Logic ; and highly pious without read-



ing Theology ; so he can be moral without reading Ethics. And contrarywise, he may be a bad reasoner, impious, and immoral inspite of his sufficient knowledge of those sciences. As Prof. Paulsen puts it emphatically : "It is impossible to teach virtue as it is to teach genius. It would be as foolish to expect our moral systems to produce virtuous characters and saints as to expect the science of æsthetics to bring forth poets, sculptors and musicians."

The true end of Ethics is twofold : its *negative* end is to criticise, correct, supplement and classify the moral distinctions discerned *intuitively* by the common people, and the moral judgments they pass *spontaneously* upon the actions of others. "All science does this ; it is a criticism of common-sense ; Ethical science will be found to do so *specifically*." Thus Ethics is, to a certain extent, destructive of some established customs and laws. Certain moral customs and laws may be due to accidents ; and there may be contradictions amongst them. One of the aims of Ethics is to sweep away the accidental ones ; and to make such changes as will adjust contradictions, leaving very little of the old ones. The institutions will be criticised in the same way. Those which are not properly adjusted to modern requirements will be altered, or abolished. The authority on which moral laws are based will be questioned. We no longer obey the moral laws because we are told to do so. We demand reasons for our obedience.

But the end of Ethics is not merely to criticise the popular codes of morality ; it has also a *positive* and

*reconstructive* side. "To explain is not to explain away, neither is to explain away to explain. Its startingpoint is the reality of duty and right. If in its first rôle as critical it seems to be attacking these, this is only the superficial aspect of its work. In its deeper aspect it is *reconstructive*. It comes, not to destroy, but to fulfil. It does so by separating the essential from the unessential, the permanent from the transient, the spirit from the form of moral and social institutions. By leaving only those which are organically connected with human nature and with one another, it gives them a value and a sanctity which, as merely traditional forms, they could never possess. Ethics is thus a criticism which makes reconstruction possible; it strips off the irrelevant and the unessential, in order to get a firmer hold of the essential. Here and there it presents us with a bold negative, but when it does so, this is found only to be "the cutting edge of a positive." " ( Prof. Muirhead, *Elements of Ethics*, p. 16, ).

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## CHAPTER II.

### Relation of Ethics to Psychology, Sociology, Politics, Metaphysics, and Theology.

In discussing the scope of Ethics we have found that the central problems of Ethics are closely connected with certain problems which properly belong to certain other sciences. This can be easily seen if we consider human life in its various aspects. In the first place, it is a conscious mental life ; so that some problems of Mental science or Psychology, are intimately connected with those of Ethics. Ethics is thus related to Psychology. In the second place, human beings live in a social environment—men are pre-eminently social beings—their life is closely connected with the life of society. In our study of the moral life we require, therefore, to know something of the character and history of the social environment. Ethics is thus related to Sociology. In the third place, human beings are political animals—they live under some kind of government, so their life is, to a large extent, regulated by the laws of the state. Ethics is thus related to Politics. Finally, human beings are parts of the world-system—their lives are partial reproductions of the world-life ; so that before we can properly describe the ultimate end of human life we must know something about the connection between man and the realities underlying the universe. This means that Ethics must have some connection with

Metaphysics and Theology. We are now going to describe the relation of Ethics to, and its distinction from, Psychology, Sociology, Politics, Metaphysics and Theology in details.

(1) **Ethics and Psychology** :—(a) **Points of Agreement**—We have found that Ethics investigates what is good or bad, right or wrong, in voluntary actions. Consequently Ethics supposes an understanding of what voluntary actions *are*, as contrasted with other kinds of actions such as the random, reflex, instinctive and automatic actions, and therefore, of the nature of *volition* or *willing*. But volition springs out of motive ; motive arises out of desire as selected or chosen by the will in agreement with character. So that the nature of a voluntary action depends, in part at least, upon character, motive and desire out of which it springs. Desire, again, springs out of feelings and emotions ; emotions out of ideas, and ideas out of perceptions. All these subjects belong to Psychology. Again, the freedom of the will, which is a postulate of the moral judgment, is a subject which, to a large extent, belongs to Psychology. The relation of desire to pleasure and the influence of reason upon action also form part of the subject-matter of Psychology. In short we must know what the nature of man is, before we can proceed to investigate the ultimate end towards which all voluntary actions should be directed. Hence the scientific study of *emotion* and *will* may be said to be the common ground of both Ethics and Psychology. Ethics is thus dependent on, and closely connected with Psychology.

(b) For these reasons, some writers go even so far as to maintain that Ethics is merely a *branch* or *department* of Psychology. This is particularly the view of the hedonists who identify the *theory* of morality with its *history* ; and thus abolishing the distinction between “is” and “ought-to-be” deny the *categorical* character of the moral laws. According to this view, then, Ethics is not a science of categorical and regulative principles which are unconditionally binding upon man as a being essentially rational and free, but a science of those natural laws which under certain conditions produce a pleasant or useful type of character. Ethics is thus regarded as consisting in nothing more than an analysis of the nature of man, and hence reduced to be a mere part of general psychological inquiry. In this sense Ethics is sometimes called *Ethology*. This view is based on the erroneous supposition that the self is not a rational principle which works according to laws of its own nature, but only a fictitious name for a merely mechanical aggregate of conscious states and processes which are nothing but effects of the actions of the physical environment upon the organism, and are regulated and combined in accordance with the mechanical laws of Association.

(c) **Points of difference** :—Ethics, however, differs from Psychology in several important points.

(i) The scope of Ethics is, in a sense, narrower than that of Psychology. Psychology deals equally with all the phases of mind—intellect, feeling and will ; but Ethics deals *primarily* with will, and only *secondarily* with intellect and feeling.

(ii) Even so far as will or conduct is concerned, Ethics and Psychology treat of it from two different standpoints. Psychology treats of it from the standpoint of its history, i. e. its origin and development ; it asks how a man actually does will, or act, and what is the nature of his action. Ethics, on the other hand, treats of it from the standpoint of its *value* or *validity* ; it asks how he *ought* to will, and how his actions can be judged as right or wrong, good or bad. Or in other words, Ethics does not investigate the conditions under which conduct originates and develops, but the *ground of preference* of one conduct over another.

(iii) The province of Ethics is, in another sense, wider than that of Psychology. Ethics cannot rest content with merely introspective psychology. Human life has other relations besides psychological. As we have found above, human life has social, political, and physical reference. Human life and also human conduct are considerably moulded and modified by the influences of the physical, social and political environment. Hence human life and conduct cannot be properly understood without the consideration of those influences. We must, therefore, include the whole physical, social and political environment in the province of Ethics. We have also found that the province of Ethics includes also some metaphysical and theological problems.

(2) **Ethics and Sociology** :—(a) **Points of agreement** :—Both Ethics and Sociology deal with human conduct. Sociology is the science which deals with those human conducts which have assumed the

forms of the social customs and institutions, and inquires into their origin and traces them through all the stages of development from the most primitive to the most civilised. Or in other words, Sociology is the history of the different forms of society, its structure, and the conditions of its progress and permanence. There is a close relation between Ethics and Sociology. Man is a social being. The human infant cannot grow and develop either physically or mentally without the help of society. The social customs and institutions ; ideas, beliefs and feelings embodied in the literature ; parents, teachers and companions ; all help considerably to develop the potential capacities of his mind. Moreover, most of the important duties of our life arise out of our social relations, and all of our virtues are chiefly exhibited in our dealings with our fellow men. Again, man as a rational being cannot exist in absolute separation from other rational beings ; reason is the universal principle in man which binds him with other beings and things. It is, therefore impossible to think of the highest moral good of man as wholly independent of the supreme social good. Thus we find that Ethics and Sociology are closely related to each other.

(b) The evolutionary hedonists regard Ethics as merely a *branch* of Sociology. According to them, (1) the moral ideas of men are merely the results of constant obedience to the customs and institutions of society which have been preserved and have survived as being useful for the preservation of the race in accordance with the law of "natural selection" or "survival of the fittest", and

(2) the well-being of the individual is entirely subordinate to that of society ; for the individual being a mere part of the *social organism*, his duties cannot be determined without reference to the nature and constitution of such organism, just as the function of a limb cannot be ascertained without reference to the nature of the organism of which it is a part.

This view labours under the misconception that the *history* of the moral ideas is identical with their *moral value*, i. e. the laws of their origin and development are the same as the laws by reference to which their goodness or badness is determined. But Ethics has nothing to do with the *origin* of the moral ideas, but with their goodness or badness. In the second place, from the standpoint of hedonism, society is not an organism, at least in the same sense as our living body is an organism. ( See, Book II, pp. 133—35 ). But, no doubt, from another standpoint, society is an organism—a higher kind of organism—an organisation or community of spiritual beings in which the good for all is also the good for each, and *vice versa*. That is to say, in such organism the good for the individual is not simply subordinated to that of society, but the two kinds of good are *correlatives*.

(c) **Points of difference** :—(i) Sociology may be called an *objective* science ; it deals with the manners, customs and institutions of society in and through which people had expressed their minds on ethical questions in the course of years and ages. Ethics, on the other hand, is a *subjective* science ; it investigates the moral ideal by reference to which the goodness or badness of



those manners, customs and institutions is determined. Or in other words, Sociology is concerned with their *history*, whereas Ethics is concerned with their *moral value or validity*.

(ii) Ethics is concerned with the *individual*, i. e. it inquires into the duties of the individual men. Sociology, on the other hand, is concerned with the *collective* men, i. e. it treats of the duties of group, or groups of men—men taken *collectively*.

(3) **Ethics and Politics**:—The manners and customs with which Sociology deals have grown up to a large extent automatically in the course of ages. The lowest savages have no politics, and little or no ethics, or thought of what is right in itself. But in more civilised time men begin to reflect on their actions and customs, finding that some of them are beneficial and others injurious; and they begin to consult together, and finally establish a governor or a governing body to deliberate for them how they should behave and act collectively, i. e. what laws they should establish, when they should make war or peace, and so on. Now *the question how the collective actions of the community should be deliberately regulated by laws and institutions, constitutes the problem of Politics*. Politics, thus, treats of the functions of government and of the relation between the governors and the governed.

(a) **Points of agreement**;—Ethics and Politics agree in this that the object of both is to determine how men *should act*, and thus guide and direct their conduct. In ancient times the relation between Ethics and Politics

was thought much closer than what it is thought now. In the Greek states a man had hardly any individual rights. He was regarded simply as a "political animal" and as very little besides. The ideals of Ethics and Politics were, to a large extent, the same. Though in modern times the individual has acquired a much greater independence of the state, yet we cannot separate altogether the ideal for the individual from the ideal for the state ;—what is right for the individual cannot be different from what is right for the state. Though Ethics and Politics are thus closely related to each other, various important distinctions may be drawn between them.

(b) **Points of difference** :—(i) There are two standards in accordance with which men may act and judge their actions—*utility* and *rightness*. The former is the standard of Politics which seeks to determine simply what lines of action are *most useful*, i. e. most conducive to the safety, wealth, health and prosperity of the community *collectively* so as to prescribe rules of actions to guide and constrain people to act collectively in the ways most conducive to the collective welfare and prosperity. Thus the ultimate aim of Political Science is *public utility*.

The latter is the standard of Ethics which seeks to determine what forms of actions are *right* in themselves. These two standards—the standard of utility and the standard of rightness—are essentially different, although they are sometimes found to be accidentally coincident. There are actions which are productive of gain to those who perform them ; but, yet, wrong in themselves. For

instance, it may be advantageous to the Turks to exterminate the Armenians from a political point of view ; but it is wicked morally. •

(ii) Politics is more *external* and *objective* than Ethics. Politics is concerned only with the *external results* of actions and their public usefulness, and does not take into account the motives out of which ~~they~~ spring. Again, Politics deals with the *general* or *collective* actions of the communities—those lines of action which are common to all, such as avoidance of theft, murder, and the like, and those in which all people join collectively, such as the maintaining of peace or war, the army, the police, &c. without providing for all the possible actions of individuals. On the contrary, it is with the actions of individuals that Ethics begins, endeavouring to determine what is right or wrong for every individual separately and rising therefrom to what is right or wrong for the community collectively. Thus Politics is *collective*, while Ethics is *individualistic*.

(iii) The scope of Ethics is wider than that of Politics. There are many ethical requirements which cannot be enforced by political laws even though they are of fundamental importance. For instance, the duty of parents to nurse and educate their children properly, the duty of giving alms to the poor, the duty of speaking truth, &c. cannot be, strictly and in all cases, enforced by law.

(iv) There is a difference with regard to *methods* also. The political laws are enforced by threats or punishments, but the moral laws cannot be enforced in that

way. For the essence of morality is a free obedience to a self-imposed law ; and if an action is done, not freely or voluntarily, but under an external compulsion or out of fear of punishment, it ceases to be moral at all.

(v) Ethics is superior to Politics in rank and authority. A political law is *binding* upon us in so far as it is moral. Ethics, thus, sits in judgment upon Politics. Morality claims to be above and ever to rule utility. Many useful and profitable actions are morally wrong. But moral laws claim to be supreme. Hence the politicians claim to be himself dominated by the *sentiment of Justice* and recommend only those advantageous lines of actions which are right at the same time. In this sense, therefore, Politics is or should be regulated by Ethics—the political laws by the moral. No law should be imposed for public gain which is not right and just in itself.

(c) It is to be remarked, however, that the relation of Ethics to Politics has been estimated somewhat differently by different schools. One ethical school, viz. the utilitarian hedonists, and particularly the egoists as Hobbes, have almost identified Ethics with Politics. ( See Book II, pp. 49–51 ). According to them, the good of society is its collective happiness, and the function of Politics is to determine what conduces to the happiness of society, and forces individuals to conform to it by imposing rewards and punishments. Now morality consists in the conformity of individuals to the rules of society for its good or happiness. From another point of view some greatest thinkers “have either refused

them separate treatment, or placed them in the closest connection with one another. Thus Plato's *Republic* is as much a treatise on moral as on political philosophy in the modern sense of the word ; Aristotle's *Ethics* is to be taken, as he insists, only as introductory to his *Politics* ; in modern philosophy it has been frequently noted that Hegel has no ethics apart from the trenchant analysis of society which he gives us in the *Philosophy of Right*."

But those writers who think that rightness of conduct is a quality distinct from its conduciveness to happiness make a clear distinction between Ethics and Politics. The intuitionists in general entertain this view. But other writers as Profs. Mackenzie, Muirhead, &c. maintain that even though Ethics and Politics are most closely related to each other, they are distinct sciences. They think that the opposition between utility and rightness has been in many instances exaggerated, and that even in those instances where any opposition is found, it is *apparent* and *immediate* ; ultimately rightness and happiness coincide and lead to the same results ; what is best in itself will be found to be most conducive to happiness.

(4) **Ethics and Metaphysics or Philosophy** :—(a) **Points of agreement** :—Man is an integral member of society or the community of rational beings, and also a factor or constituent of the world-system. Therefore his actions affect, for good or evil, the well-being of his fellow-men, and his own destiny as well as theirs as factor in the world-system ; and thereby

affect also the world as a whole. Indeed, man's actions are practically infinite in their *results*, i. e. they produce effects, which, again, produce other effects, and these still other effects, and so on to the end of time.

"Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And live for ever and for ever."

Therefore the question of the goodness or badness of our actions cannot be separated wholly from the question of their future consequences to humanity and to the world as a whole. And further, if man is a factor in the world-system he must have an *ultimate end or purpose* to serve as a member of that system, and therefore, the goodness or badness of his action will be inseparable from the question what is his *ultimate end and function* in the system. And still further if the man's rational actions are all directed, as they should be, towards his *highest good*, the question what is this highest good? will be inseparable from the question what are his ultimate end and function as a member of the world-system?

Hence the fundamental problem of Ethics cannot be settled entirely apart from the question of man's ultimate end and function as a member of the world-system (whether it is merely "to eat, drink and be merry" as Arisippus preached, or some higher end), and therefore supposes a *knowledge of the world-system, and of the place and function of man as a member of that system*. But the attempt to understand the world-system and the man's place and function therein—the relation of man to nature and to God—is *Metaphysics or Philosophy*. Consequently the problem of Ethics cannot be wholly

separated and settled apart from that of Philosophy. Some writers, indeed, have tried to separate them as far as possible ; but the school of Philosophy especially to which Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians as Green, Caird, Mackenzie, Muirhead, Dewey, &c. belong, recognises, more than any other, the dependence of Ethics on Philosophy.

Some philosophers go even so far as to reduce Ethics to a *department* of Metaphysics. Thus Plato identified the ultimate notions of Ethics with those of Metaphysics. "In certain pantheistic systems, again, which overlook the distinction between the Finite and the Absolute Self, Ethics is hardly dissociated from Metaphysics."

(b) **Points of difference** :—Though closely related to Philosophy, Ethics has a narrower province than that of Philosophy. Ethics deals with human life taken as a whole and investigates the *supreme good* towards which it is tending ; whereas Philosophy deals with the whole cosmos of which human life is only a part, and attempts to determine the *ultimate good* or the *Final End* towards which it is progressing ; and in doing so it also investigates the precise relation between these two kinds of good—the *human good* and the *cosmic good*. Thus Ethics is an inquiry distinct from Philosophy.

(5) **Ethics and Theology** :—(a) **Points of agreement** :—Theology is the doctrine of the Absolute or God, i. e. of the first and central spiritual Principle which is the ultimate source and explanation of all

that is and is known. Thus the ultimate aim of Metaphysics and Theology is identical. Aristotle called his "first philosophy" or metaphysics "theology"; and in modern times Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians identified the two. Prof. James Seth maintains: "Metaphysics is essentially and inevitably theological; if we cannot exclude metaphysics we cannot exclude theology. If we must ask, What is man's relation to nature? we must also ask, What is his relation to God?" We have found (see, above, 4), that the supreme end of man's life cannot be known without knowing what such life is, and what such life is cannot be known without knowing its relation to the world-life—the life of the Absolute or God of which it is only a partial and incomplete reproduction. Or to state this fact otherwise: the *human good* with which Ethics is concerned is a part of the *cosmic good*; so that every voluntary act has two references or one reference viewed in two ways;—it has a reference to the human good, and it has also a reference to the cosmic good. Thus "the same act would be religious if it were conceived of as furthering a cosmic purpose, or as charged with meaning for a universal moral order that is being consummated upon the earth. It may indeed be feasiably maintained that no good conduct is entirely without reference to some such universal end; but in so far as the distinction between morality and religion is permissible at all, it must be explained as one between two views that may be taken of moral conduct, not between two different kinds of conduct, or two different standards of moral



judgments." (Prof. Muirhead, *Elements of Ethics*, p. 181 ).

This close relationship between Ethics and Theology can be understood in another way. The moral ideal, as we shall find in the sequel ( see, Book II, Chap, VI ), is the *perfection* of the moral life ; and our actual moral life falls always far short of its ideal. But this ideal moral life in which the supreme moral good is completely realized, i. e. in which every conduct is in perfect harmony with the moral ideal or the supreme moral good, cannot be an illusion, but must be a stern reality, because it is the goal of our *real* moral life. Like every other ideal, the moral ideal "requires a certain faith in the possibility of its attainment." All human inquiry ultimately rests upon some faiths or rather presuppositions. All scientific investigations rest upon the faith or presupposition that the world is *rational* or *understandible* ; and all metaphysical inquiries proceed on the faith or presupposition that the world is a *system*—an 'organisation of experience, i. e. a unity amidst variety—the manifestation of a single ultimate principle. Similarly all ethical inquiries rest on the faith or presupposition that there is a moral ideal by reference to which the facts of the moral life can be explained. Thus like scientific and metaphysical faiths we have ethical faith. We cannot do without it ; without it our moral life will be emptied of all meaning—it will be as chimerical as a mirage in a desert. "It is this ethical faith that is usually understood by Religion." But what is this moral ideal ? It is the perfected moral

life and is evidently the Divine Life, which is the ultimate goal of all life. Consequently, the true interpretation of man's moral life has inevitable reference to his relation to that life of God which, in some sense, must include the life of nature and of man. Thus Ethics leads up to Theology and rests there as its final goal.

(b) **Points of difference** :—But, yet, we must not identify Ethics with Theology. The province of Ethics is narrower than that of Theology. Ethics takes into consideration only the human life and attempts to organise and interpret the facts of such life from a particular standpoint ; while Theology investigates the Divine Life—its nature and relations, and attempts to organise and interpret the facts of the cosmos by reference to such life. Thus the immediate and primary interests of Ethics are *human* ; while those of Theology *cosmic*.

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## CHAPTER III.

### Method of Ethics.

By a *method* is generally meant any rational and systematic procedure which we adopt to attain a definite end in view—either the end of discovering truth, or the end of communicating it to others. Or as Kant puts it, method is a “procedure according to principles.” What is then, meant by the method of Ethics? “A Method of Ethics is explained,” says Dr. Sidgwick, “to mean any rational procedure by which we determine what individual human beings ‘ought’—or what it is right for them—to do, or to seek to realize by voluntary action.” ( *Methods of Ethics*, p. 1 ).

I. Following the above definition Dr. Sidgwick classifies the ethical methods in the following way—

(1) The method by which some ethical writers have sought to investigate the true moral laws or the rational rules of conduct,—or the absolute rightness or wrongness of actions in themselves independent of their ultimate results. ( Intuitionism ).

(2) The method by which some ethical writers have sought to investigate the nature of the *Summum Bonum* or the supreme good of human life, and the means by which it can be attained. But, as the nature of the supreme good has been differently conceived, this method is again, subdivided into—

(a) The method of those who regard the supreme

good as the *perfection* or *excellence* of human nature. ( Perfectionism ). Dr. Sidgwick includes it in Intuitionism.

(b) The method of those who conceive the supreme good to be *pleasure* or *happiness*. ( Hedonism ). This method, again, may be subdivided into—

(i) Egoism or Egoistic Hedonism, and (ii) Utilitarianism, or Universalistic Hedonism, according as pleasure or happiness is regarded as that of each individual, or as that of all human beings or even all sentient creatures.

It should be noticed here that Dr. Sidgwick has omitted to take into account Evolutionary Hedonism which is allied from one standpoint to Hedonism and from another to perfectionism.

**Criticism**—(1) Dr. Sidgwick's classification is based on the confusion between the theory and the method of Ethics. This is clearly indicated by the title of his book—viz "Methods of Ethics"—in which he treats, not of the real methods of Ethics, but of the ethical theories or standards of the moral judgment by reference to which different ethical schools have sought to explain rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness, of human conduct. So that his classification is no classification of the ethical methods, but of the ethical theories.

(2) It will not do to say that every ethical theory has its own peculiar method ; so that the classification of the ethical theories is equivalent, in a sense, to that of the ethical methods. This is evidently not true. Take, for instance, the classification of Dr. Sidgwick himself. He regards Egoism and Utilitarianism as two distinct

theories. Are their methods also different ? Certainly not. The methods of both are *empirical* and *psychological*. Again, he includes Perfectionism in Intuitionism. Are their methods strictly the same ? The answer must be in the negative. The method of intuition is not the same with the dialectic method adopted by the latter. We must, therefore, conclude that Dr. Sidgwick's classification regarded as the classification of the ethical methods is unsupportable.

II. In his *Types of Ethical Theory* Dr. Martineau gives the following classification :—

The ethical methods are first divided into two great classes—

A. **Unpsychological**—which seeks to determine the supreme Good for man by reference to the nature of the Non-Ego. This can, again, be subdivided into—

(a) **Metaphysical**—which seeks to deduce the idea of the supreme Good either from the *nonmenal* side of the world, or from the nature of God. And this can be viewed in two ways :—

(i) **Transcendental**—which regards God as transcending the world in all respect. ( Plato ).

(ii) **Immanent**—which regards God as wholly co-extensive and co-eval with the world. ( Spinoza ).

(b) **Physical**—which derives the idea of the supreme Good from the *phenomenal* side of the world. ( Comte ).

B. **Psychological**—which seeks to determine the supreme Good by studying the nature of the Ego itself. This can be subdivided into—

(a) **Idiopsychological**—according to which the idea of duty or Moral Law is unique, inexplicable, and irreducible to any other idea. ( Martineau ).

(b) **Hetero-psychological**—which denies the unique and inexplicable character of duty or Moral Law, and seeks to derive its idea from non-moral elements. This can, again, be divided into—

(1) **Hedonistic**—which seeks to explain the rightness or wrongness of human conduct by reference to pleasure or pain produced by it. This can be subdivided into—

(i) **Non-evolutional**—according to which duty is determined by the love of pleasure or “self-seeking” or “fear of man”. ( Hume, Bentham, Mill, Bain, &c ).

(ii) **Evolutional**—which seeks to define the idea of duty from conduct which secures perfect adjustment between the man’s organism and its environment. ( H. Spencer ).

(2) **Dianoetic**—which identifies the Right with the True. ( Cudworth, Clarke and Price ).

(3) **Aesthetic**—which identifies the Right with the Beautiful. ( Shaftesbury and Hutcheson ).

**Criticism**—Like Dr. Sidgwick, Dr. Martineau also seems to have confounded theory with method. His classification may be interpreted as a classification of both theory and method. But, as we have found, they are not identical. No doubt, every theory has a method. But we may arrive at the same theory by different methods, just as we may arrive at a destination by different roads. For instance, Hedonism may be arrived

at by a psychological as well as by an unpsychological method. The modern hedonists as Hume, Bentham, Mill, Bain, &c. arrived at their theory by the former, while the ancient hedonists as Aristippus, Epicurus. &c. by the latter. Again, Dr. Martineau, considers Hedonism psychological and Positivism unpsychological ; but really both of them are closely allied to, or rather based upon, phenomenalism which is called by him physical, i. e. unpsychological. Still again, Dr. Martineau calls his own method idiopsychological, and that of the Aesthetic School hetero-psychological ; but really there is very little distinction between his own intuitionism and the Moral Sense theory of the latter school. These facts are sufficient to show that his classification is defective and therefore unacceptable, ( see also Types of Ethical Theory, vol I. p. 9., where he himself admits that the same theories have been arrived at by different methods. ).

III. The two kinds of classification of ethical methods as discussed above have been found, on examination, to be the classifications of ethical theories. What is, then, the true ethical method ? To ascertain this we must take into consideration the various methods adopted by the different ethical schools. All these various methods may be brought under two great classes :— (1) *empirical* or *scientific*, and (2) *speculative* or *metaphysical*.

(1) **Empirical or scientific method** :—The contemporary writers have given different forms to this class of the ethical methods.

(a) According to H. Spencer and other evolutionary writers the true method of ethics is *physical* and *biological*. Conduct as defined by Spencer is "acts adjusted to ends", and what we call moral conduct is the highly developed form of conduct which it assumes in the last stage of its evolution, and has survived and been preserved according to the universal law of evolution by "natural selection" or "survival of the fittest". The moral conduct thus differing from other conduct only in quantity, not in quality, the science of Ethics is also a natural science dealing with the moral phenomena exactly in the same way as other natural sciences deal with the phenomena of nature. Even Prof. Alexander and Sir Leslie Stephen, who recognise "the inner significance of conduct as the expression of character", would not hesitate in explaining the moral phenomena by the evolutionary laws of "struggle for existence" and "survival of the fittest". The obvious defects of this theory are that it has confused the *history* of the moral phenomena with their *moral value or validity*,—*is* or *must* of them with their "ought-to-be". It is one thing to show how they have come to be what they are, it is another thing to show why they *should* be so. Hence the science of Ethics is not a *natural* science, and its method is not the method of the Physical science or Biology. ( see Book II, Chap. V. 3, 4, 5, ).

(b) Some other writers such as Hume, Bentham, Mill, Bain, &c, recognising this peculiarity of moral facts, have adopted the *psychological method*. They urge that all moral phenomena are phenomena of conscious-



ness—psychological phenomena, and therefore admit of psychological treatments ; and that the function of Ethics as a science thus consists merely in the classification of the motives or ends from which men act, the analysis, simplification and unification of all complex mental activities, the tracing up the genesis of conscience, and showing how the 'idea of "should be" has been gradually developed out of the knowledge of the "Is" of human life. Such is the psychological Ethics. This view labours under the same confusion as the preceding. In this case, as in the preceding, the actual is confounded with the ideal—"is" or "must" with "ought-to-be". As Prof. James Seth truly observes : "Psychology is perfectly competent to provide a phenomenology of the moral-consciousness, it remains for ethical philosophy to interpret the meaning of those phenomena." Hence Ethics cannot be regarded as a branch of Psychology and its method as a *psychological* one.

(c) Some writers, again, regard the true method of Ethics as the *historical* or *genetic*. This is particularly the view of the evolutionists in general, and H. Spencer, President Schurman, and Sir Leslie Stephen in particular ; and is closely allied to the biological method. This view is based on the supposition that "to understand any phenomenon is to know its genesis : being and becoming are one and the same. And since there is an evolution of morality, as of all else, the clue to its explanation will be found in the process of its historical development. Ethics assumes, therefore, the universal form of current science, and becomes a study of origins."

The main and primary function of Ethics consists, thus, only in tracing the origin and development of the moral ideas and institutions—in describing the process by which they have come to be what they are. Thus Ethics has been reduced to be a mere department of Sociology. The defects of this view, like those of the preceding, are that it confounds the *history* of the moral phenomena with their *meaning* or *valivity*—the actual with the ideal. As Prof. James Seth truly remarks: "Ethics is interested in historical facts, not as facts, but as containing the partial revelation of an ideal without which the history itself would be impossible. It is not in the historical facts themselves, but in their eternal meaning and ultimate explanation, that the ethical interest centres. Ethics is, like logic and æsthetic, a normative or ideal science. Its business is the discovery of the moral ideal or criterion and appreciation of actual morality in terms of this ideal." (A study of Ethical Principles, second edition, p. 26).

(d) From the above it is plain that the true method of Ethics is not any one of the methods adopted by Physics, Biology, Psychology and Sociology. Is not then the true method of Ethics *scientific* at all? Profs. Muirhead and James Seth are of opinion that the true method of Ethics is scientific in the sense that all the general characteristics of a scientific method are possessed by it, even although it is not wholly the method of any particular science as mentioned above. Prof. Muirhead argues thus: the science of Ethics, like any other science, *accurately observes* the phenomena under investi-

gation, *classifies* them according to their most significant differences, and *explains* them. But there are lower and higher forms of explanation. An explanation may consist in referring a phenomenon to its cause, and a law to a higher law or laws. This is lower form of explanation. But the higher form of explanation, though including the lower, goes further and consists in showing, first, that the phenomenon under investigation is an integral part of an *organic system*, and secondly, that the conditions of its existence are the aggregate of the relations in which it stands to other phenomena as similarly integral members of the system and to the system itself. Or in other words, it consists in showing, not only the *causal* relation, but also the *organic* relation of the phenomenon to other phenomena. Only in this way the phenomenon is fully explained. "I claim then for ethics," writes Prof. Muirhead, "that it is a science in the same sense as any one of the physical or natural sciences. It aims at *explaining* moral judgments as astronomy aims at explaining the motions of the planets or geometry the properties of figures, by showing their place in a system which cannot exist as a consistent whole without them. Thus, to anticipate, the judgment that theft is wrong is not explained by merely referring it to a moral sense or feeling, or to the decree of a divine will, but by showing that disregard for other people's property is inconsistent with that system of mutual relations which we call social life." (Elements of Ethics p. 28 ).

Prof. James Seth also maintains, that the true method

of Ethics is *scientific*. His argument is this : even although the normative sciences deal with the judgments of value, and the natural sciences with the judgments of facts, there is no distinction with regard to their method. "The method of science is always the same, namely, the systematisation of our ordinary judgments through their reduction to a common unifying principle, or through their purification from inconsistency with one another. Whether these judgments are judgments of fact, or judgments of value, makes no difference in the method. There is nothing mysterious, or superior, or "metaphysical" in the procedure of the normative sciences ; it is the plain, unmetaphysical, strictly scientific method, only applied in a different field—to a different subject-matter. It is merely this difference in the subject-matter that I have desired to assert and to emphasise. The business of ethics, for example, is, like the business of physics, simply to organise the judgments of common-sense or ordinary thought. There is a "common-sense" of value, as there is a "common-sense" of fact ; and there is a science of value, as there is a science of fact. The function of the former science, as of the latter, is simply to make common-sense coherent and consistent with itself." ( *A Study of Ethical Principles*, eighth edition, p. 35 ).

(2) **Speculative or metaphysical method of Ethics** :—We have found that Ethics is a normative science ; it is primarily concerned with the investigation of the "norm" or the ideal of human life, and that in so far as this task of Ethics is concerned it is more closely

allied to Metaphysics than any other science. The central problem of Ethics is not, "What are the facts or phenomena of morality ? but, How are we to interpret the facts ; what is their ultimate significance ?" Now, this problem is really the problem of Metaphysics. It is only Metaphysics that investigates the ultimate significance of things, while sciences rest content with their relative significance. "The scientific moralists insist on taking moral facts in abstraction from their bearing on the whole theory of the cosmos. So taken, they assume the character of mere facts, they lose their ethical meaning. An adequate ethical view is not reached, a satisfactory explanation of 'morality' is not attained, so long as we separate morality either from nature or from God. Reality is one and its elements must be seen in their mutual relation if they are to be understood as in reality they are. Ethics is therefore inseparable from Metaphysics, and it needs no 'ingenious sophistry' to 'force them into relation'." ( Prof. J. Seth, A Study of Ethical Principles, second edition, pp. 31-32), These considerations evidently prove that the true method of Ethics is, *at least partly, metaphysical.*

The introduction of metaphysical method into ethical investigation is not entirely modern. Almost all the ancient writers descended into Ethics from Metaphysics. They tried to explain moral phenomena by reference to metaphysical principles. Plato identified ethical notions with metaphysical ; and all the pantheistic writers left no gap between Ethics and Metaphysics or Theology. In modern times, the dogmatic rationalists of the Carte-

sian school, by introducing the doctrine of "innate ideas" evidently adopted the speculative or *a priori* method; and the Hegelian school seems to be more inclined to the metaphysical method than the scientific.

(iv) **The true method of Ethics both scientific and metaphysical:**—Thus we find that there are two rival theories with regard to the nature of the true method of Ethics. "From the very first the attempt at an empirical deduction of ethical principles has been opposed to the *a priori* theory of their origin." We have found that the method of Ethics is not the method of Physics, Biology, Psychology, or Sociology. Yet, some as Profs. Muirhead and James Seth maintain that the ethical method is scientific inasmuch as the function of Ethics and the function of the natural sciences are the same—viz, observation, classification and explanation of phenomena, although the former is concerned with the moral phenomena and the latter with the physical. This view, thus, confines the function of Ethics *wholly* to the organisation and interpretation of the moral phenomena without including in it also the investigation of the ultimate significance of those phenomena, thereby separating the "science of Ethics" from the "metaphysics of Ethics." The following reasons are given for such separation: "Neither the natural nor the normative sciences deals with the question of their own ultimate validity. It is the function of metaphysics to act as critic of the sciences: the sciences do not criticise themselves. Each assumes the validity of its own standpoint, and of its own system of judgments." (Prof. J. Seth,

A Study of Ethical Principles, eighth edition, p. 31 ). Yet, in the second edition of his book, ( p. 28 ) he writes thus." "Only I would claim for ethics in addition to the narrower task of science, even so conceived, the larger philosophic task. As already indicated, the science of Ethics must have for its complement an ethical philosophy or a metaphysics of ethics." Thus what he said in the second edition of his book he changed in the eighth edition. But even in the latter edition he was compelled to admit : " A judgment of value is speculative—we might almost say metaphysical—in a sense in which a judgment of fact is not speculative or metaphysical. Its point of view is transcendental, not empirical. It follows that the science which organises such judgments into a system is also transcendental, and, in that sense, metaphysical. Yet such a science is not strictly to be identified with metaphysics." ( Ibid. p. 34 ).

The truth is, Ethics, being a normative science, is both a science and metaphysics at the same time ; and its method is both *scientific* and *metaphysical*. This view agrees with the definition of Ethics we have arrived at above. We have found there that the primary function of Ethics is to investigate the supreme end of life, its secondary function being to organise and interpret the moral phenomena by reference to the conception of that end. The former function is evidently *metaphysical*, and the latter is *scientific*. The indirect function of Ethics which closely relates it to Psychology, Sociology, Politics, &c. also makes its method *partly*

scientific. Prof. W. Wundt is of similar opinion. He writes thus in his *Ethics*, (English translation, part I. pp. 16—17) : “If then a particular investigation, lying within the special domain of the empirical method, is inadequate of itself to furnish us with principles by whose aid we can gain an understanding of the facts of the moral world, the only thing to do is to make the whole range of these facts themselves the basis of our inquiry. As may easily be foreseen, empirical observation, in ethical as in natural science, will lead to postulates which are not themselves immediate facts of experience, but which must be added to these in order to make their interconnection intelligible. But principles that possess this character of postulates cannot ever be really discovered, but only the way paved for their discovery, by the empirical method. Their actual discovery is the task of speculation ; and speculation, in its turn, can look for a permanent result of its efforts only when it has full and complete possession of the gathered store of critically tested scientific experience.”

“In this way the speculative method receives its dues along with the empirical. The valid objection against the prevailing tendencies of speculative ethics is urged not against the method itself, but against the way in which it is applied. Ethics is neither a purely speculative nor a purely empirical discipline ; like every general science, it is empirical and speculative at the same time. But in ethics as elsewhere it follows from the natural course of our thinking about things that the empirical procedure must come before the speculative.



Observation must furnish the materials with which speculation erects its structure."

"In so far as ethics avails itself of speculation it is a *metaphysical* discipline. For any investigation is metaphysical which is concerned with those assumptions as to the ultimate nature of things that are not immediately accessible to experience. \* \* But although the empirical and speculative methods must be separated for the treatment of ethical problems they are not to be regarded as two entirely different forms of thought. *It is rather true that they are complimentary constituents of one and the same mode of procedure.*"

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## CHAPTER IV.

### The Psychological basis of Ethics

( Moral and non-moral actions ; analysis of Desire,  
Intention, Motive, End and Volition. )

#### I. **Necessity of psychological basis :—**

Ethics investigates the supreme good of human life, or the ultimate end of human conduct. But to know the supreme good of human life we must know beforehand what human life is ; and similarly, to know the ultimate end of human conduct we must know beforehand what conduct is. Or in other words, Psychology as the natural science of human life, or conduct, must precede Ethics as the normative science of such life, or conduct. ( see, above, Chapter II, § 1. ). Such being the case, it is generally found that the inadequacies and defects of an ethical theory are largely due to those of the underlying psychological theory. This is firmly corroborated if we carefully examine the history of ethical theories from ancient to modern times. In both ancient and modern thought we find two opposite types of ethical theory closely allied to two opposite types of psychological doctrine. The former type is directly based upon that psychological view of human nature which regards it as *simply sentient*, and the latter on that which regards it as *purely rational*. In very remote time, in India, we have the illustration of the former in Charvakism and in

the hedonism as taught in the *Sanhitas* and *Brahmanas*; whereas the illustration of the latter is found in the pure rationalism as taught in the *Sankhya* philosophy, and in the *Vedanta* as interpreted by Sankara. Later on, in Greece, Plato and Aristotle had "each a double representation of the virtuous life, corresponding to the dualism which they discovered in man's nature—a lower and a higher life, according as the lower or the higher nature finds play". Even although they represented the ordinary virtuous life as a harmonious life of passions affections, and desires in obedience to reason, yet both conceived "the highest or ideal life as a life of pure reason or intellectual contemplation." These two opposite currents of ethical thought then passed, with much greater antithesis, through the two rival theories, one of which was represented by the Cyrenaics and Epicureans, and the other by the Cynics and Stoics, to the ethics of sensibility or Hedonism in its different forms, and to the ethics of pure reason or Rationalism of Kant and the Intuitionists in general, in modern times.

But a still higher view of human nature is possible. Human nature is not purely rational or purely sentient, but both at the same time. The concrete self is a rational self working and realising itself in and through the sentient—i. e. the passions, affections and desires. Hence both Hedonism and Rationalism are one-sided or abstract, because they are based upon abstract views of human nature. "The half-view of human life rests upon a half-view of human nature." The real, concrete, whole man is cut into two—a rational half and a sentient half.

Each of the rival theories grasps one half, throwing off the other. Hence the dualism—false if taken *absolutely*; true if taken *relatively*. But true psychology reveals man to be a whole—an *organic unity* of reason and sensibility; in a word, he is *will* in which both reason and sensibility meet and are reconciled. Hence the true moral life is the life of the whole man, of the moral *person*; and the true ethics is the ethics of *personality*. This third current of ethical thought—this ethics of personality or reconciliation—was first taught by the Hindu sages in the *Upanishads*, or in the *Vedānta*, an epitome of them, as interpreted by Rāmānuja and Nimbarka. (see. Book II, Chap. VI). Aristotle had a glimpse of it in his Eudæmonism as propounded in the Nicomachean Ethics. But this ethical doctrine reappeared with greater emphasis and explicitness in Hegelianism in modern times and assumed various names such as Perfectionism, Eudæmonism and Energism. Thus we find that three distinct psychological views of human nature are at the root of three distinct types of ethical theory. It is therefore impossible for Ethics to separate itself from Psychology. We come to the same conclusion if we consider the matter from the standpoint of conduct. Conduct, as we shall find in the sequel, is closely connected with motive, intention, desire, character, and volition which are only different aspects or functions of the self regarded as *will*. It is therefore indispensably necessary to analyse and examine the nature of all these psychical elements before we can, with any clearness, enter into the discussion of matters purely ethical.

2. **Psychology of Will** :—We have found that the moral life is a life of will determined and regulated by the conception of the supreme good or the ultimate end. What is, then, will ? “*Will* is a word traditionally used to express the sum-total of all our performances—whether in the form of physical movement or of more purely intellectual, aesthetical and ethical pursuits, under the ‘guidance’—as we say of reason, and because of the ‘motives’ furnished by our various emotions, sentiments, and desires. Thus “willing” : (*Wollen*) comes to be almost co-extensive in our thought, with that entire sphere of “acting” (*Handeln*), and even of “doing” (*Thun*), which we call our own.” (Prof. Ladd, *Psychology*, p. 609). Thus, in this wide sense, the phenomena of will include all *active manifestations* from the simplest to the most complex and developed. The simpler manifestations of will are generally termed “conation,” while the higher and more complex phases are called “volition”.

**Nature of Conation** :—Being the primitive and the simplest manifestation of will, conation cannot be logically defined. “We cannot define what it is to be active or to do ; for there are no simpler terms than these same words—‘to be active’ and ‘to do’—by which to describe such experience.” We can however classify all conative phenomena in two ways : (a) all the bodily movements carried out by the ‘voluntary’ muscles fall under conation. So that they should be carefully distinguished from those movements of the organism which are *unconscious*. We may then say that conation includes all

movements that are accompanied by *consciousness*, and are marked off as *psychical* actions. In this broad sense, conation includes the blind, primitive movements.

(b) But will does not manifest itself only in the movements of the organism, but also in the movements of the mind. Thus all active process of attention or concentration—"the determination of the direction and amount of attention—the fixing and distribution of mental energy in the so-called field of consciousness"—comes under conation. "Thus it is that when we conceive of ourselves as "doing something," it is always either in the way of moving some of the bodily members so as to accomplish a certain end, or else in the way of voluntarily controlling the ideas, thoughts, feelings, and other forms of mental life. .... In general it may be said that *all mental life manifests itself to the subject of that life as being, in one of its fundamental aspects, its own spontaneous activity.*" ( Prof. Ladd, *Primer of Psychology*, pp. 194—95 ).

**Nature of volition.**—"Those 'blind acts of will' or 'mere conations' which account for many of the ( primitive ) movements... ..become more and more displaced by acts of will that show intelligence and foresight. Such an act of will may then be called a 'volition'. A volition thus implies a certain development of will, and not of will alone ( as though this were possible ), but of all the connected conscious powers of the mind. It may be defined as a definite conation ( or conscious doing ) directed toward realizing some end that is pictured before the mind, preceded or accom-

panied by a condition of desire, and usually accompanied or followed by a feeling of effort. ... More or less clearly, however, every volition is an act of will which knows what it wants." (Ibid, p 199). (see also Prof. Stout, *Manual of Psychology*, second edition, pp. 599—601).

(A) **The involuntary roots of voluntary movements** :—Our nature is endowed, from the very beginning, with some tendencies or impulses to activity, e. g. the yearning after *happiness*, the impulse towards *perfection* or *self-development*, and the instinct of *self-preservation*. From the definition of voluntary movement it is evident that an idea of the movement must be present in the mind of the agent, and consequently, in order to have that idea the movement itself must be initiated and performed, in "the first instance, not by the will of the agent, but by some blind impulse of his nature. This original and instinctive factor shows itself first in the form of some vague *impulse*—a vague process of craving or striving. The primitive movements thus initiated may be divided into the following classes.

(a) **Random movements** :—These movements are supposed "to originate chiefly in 'conation' as a blind action of will, without any conscious end to be reached". The spasmodic movements of the infant, such as the movements of the arms, legs, &c. are instances in point.

(b) **Sensori-motor movements : Conscious Reflexes** :—But the spontaneous self-movements would not be sufficient to keep up the organism for a long

time ; for life consists in continuous adjustment of the organism to its environment. Hence the necessity of a class of movements which are reactions of the organism upon the external stimuli. (i) Some of these movements are *unconscious*, i. e. are not preceded by any conscious element, such as coughing, sneezing, breathing, &c. (ii) There are others which are more or less initiated by conscious psychical elements. They are called *conscious Reflexes*, which are to be found in such actions as closing the fingers over small objects when placed on the palms of the hand, closing the eye-lids when something is brought close to the eyes. (iii) There is another class of conscious reflexes which are the acquired results of habit. All habitual actions are of this nature. Thus, brushing away a fly from the face, stretching out the hand to stop the object approaching us, the reciprocation of hand-shaking, and so forth, are the instances of this class of movements.

(c) **Aesthetic-motor movements** :—They represent those movements “which have their chief psychical excitants in affective consciousness, in feelings, as having—ordinarily if not always—a tone of pleasure or pain.”

(d) **Impulsive or instinctive movements** :—The fourth group of involuntary movements is styled impulsive or instinctive movements. It is closely allied to the group of conscious reflexes, but marked off from it by its *complexity* and *intensity of feeling* accompanying the sensational element. Most of the actions of the lower animals, such as the building instinct of the beaver, the hatching instinct of the birds, and so forth,



are of this class. In the case of human beings the most common and apparent instance is *sucking*. The most striking characteristic of instinctive movements is that its source lies within, "in the motor centres, rather than in the external stimulus, and is guided by reference to a 'silent' or unconscious end."

(e) **Ideo-motor movements** :—This class of movements is "excited, chiefly, by the presence of an idea in consciousness." In this case, the movement follows directly upon either the idea of it or of the sensation attending it, as in the preceding case it follows upon the sensation itself. But, yet, the movement is not strictly voluntary. "We are aware of nothing," says Prof. James, "between the conception and the execution. \* \* \* We think the act, and it is done." Most of the higher actions of our life are included in this class of movements. Ideo-motor movements are indispensably necessary for the economy of life. If we had to deliberate and decide in every instance, our life would be burdensome ; but we are saved from much worry of life when a train of ideas takes the place of volition and bears us smoothly on our way.

(f) **Imitative movements** :—This class comprises those movements which are excited, in one individual, "by the presentation of the movements resulting from conscious ideas and feelings in another individual, without, however, awakening the ideas of feelings themselves, or the conscious purpose to express them. In infants, smile answers 'in imitation' of smile, frown of frown, grimace of grimace, &c."

**(B The genesis of voluntary movements :-**

A voluntary movement presupposes experience. We know further from its definition that not only an idea of the movement itself but also an idea of "end" consisting in the attainment of some results of the movement must precede it. As man has no prophetic vision of his doing and its results from the beginning, it is easy to see that these ideas must be supplied by experience. That is to say, he must know before he acts the nature of the action to be executed, the results to be aimed at, and the necessary causal connection between the action and its results ; and he can learn these only from experience. As Prof. Hoffding puts it : "the involuntary activity forms the basis and the content of the voluntary. The will is in no way creative, but only modifying and selective." ( Psychology, Eng. tr. p 330 ). It follows from this that the voluntary movements must be preceded by involuntary movements.

Now, these primitive movements, or the primitive impulses or tendencies to these movements constitute the "given" materials in the regulation and organisation of which volition consists. "The beginnings are given by nature. But these primary movements and their sensational correlates are vague and diffuse ; they constitute a "motor-*continuum*" which is gradually made discrete and definite. This occurs largely, as we have seen, involuntarily. A movement is determined by the idea of the movement, that is, by the anticipation of the movement's sensible effects, without the explicit intervention of will. Now if there be such a thing as voluntary activity, its

source must be found in the manipulation of the ideas of movements already made." "Volition, then, consists in the direction or guidance of given impulsive tendencies or propensities to act. The function of will is not to create, but to direct and control. The impulsive basis of volition, like the sensational basis of knowledge, is *given*; the former is the *datum* of the moral life, as the latter is the *datum* of the intellectual life. Man is, to begin with and always, a sentient being, a creature of animal sensibility. Such sensibility is the matter of which will is the form, the manifold of which will is the unity. That organisation of impulse which is already accomplished for the animal in the shape of instinct, has to be accomplished by man himself." ( Prof. James Seth, *A Study of Ethical Principles*, pp. 42-43 ).

But this is not all. Human activities are not prompted by blind primitive impulses or tendencies only. At least in developed life most of the actions are initiated by "desires" and "ideals"—new kinds of forces—which arise out of the action of reason upon those impulses or tendencies. In words of Dr. Martineau we may, then, say that all the springs of action are *not primary*, but some or most of them are *secondary*. Thus *hunger* is an impulse or primary spring of action, while *desire* for food is a secondary spring of action. Hence, although in the undeveloped form of life, volition consists *mainly* in regulating and organising the impulses, because desires and ideals are few and far between in it, in the developed life its *main* function is the regulation and organisation of *desires and ideals*.

(c) **The analysis of the process of volition** :—The process of volition, at least in its fully developed form, may be analysed into the following factors :—

(i) **Pause or inhibition** :—When two or more impulses or desires contend with one another in consciousness, i. e. draw the mind towards the attainment of different ends, the will intervenes, checks or inhibits them, and thereby produces a state of pause or arrest of action. This state of arrest is psychologically very important ; because it shows that will has the power of control over the blind impulses of our nature and can break the continuity of the merely impulsive life. As Prof. J. Seth remarks :—“the first step towards the control of animal impulse, towards the subjection of a master-idea, is to postpone its realisation.” This state does not imply that we intend to drive off the contending impulses or desires from our consciousness ; what it really means is that we intend to weigh and compare their respective value and importance in order to select one to the exclusion of others. As Prof. Stout puts it : “very often, however, the thought of the Self does not at once give rise to a decision, positive or negative, but only to arrest of action, so as to give time for deliberation. It may be that the way in which this or that line of conduct, if realised, would affect the Self as a whole past, present, future and ideal, can only be brought before consciousness with sufficient fulness to determine action by a more or less prolonged train of thought. When this is so, the concept of the Self as a whole will

not directly tend to reinforce or suppress a desire ; it will rather tend to postponement of action, until the concept of Self and of the action and its consequences are developed in such detail in relation to each other that a decision becomes possible." ( A Manual of Psychology, second edition, pp. 603—604 ).

(ii) **Deliberation** :—The stage of pause or arrest is followed by the stage of *deliberation*. It consists in weighing and comparing the relative value and importance of the different contending impulses or desires by reference to the interest of the Self as a whole as conceived at the time. If a single impulse or desire is present in a time and leads immediately to action, the action will not be strictly voluntary. In fact, in a voluntary act, when a single desire seems to be present, it is not present alone, but is opposed, at least, by its antagonist, viz aversion to the action, with more or less distinctness. In all cases of voluntary action, there is a *conflict of impulses or desires* drawing the mind towards different objects. This stage of conflict is what is known as the stage of *deliberation*. In this stage, the agent does not merely desire objects, and then immediately and unthinkingly proceeds to attain them, but ponders over them by considering whether the attainment of any one of them will satisfy the Self *as a whole*. Thus so long as deliberation goes on, the contending desires may be regarded as "motives" for deciding ; when we arrive at any decision, the triumphant desires become "motives" for action. "Or, to put the case in another way, while the process of deliberation is going on, the competing

desires are regarded as possible motives for action ; when the decision is formed, they become actual motives for action." ( Prof. Stout, *Manual of Psychology*, p. 605 ).

(iii) **Decision or choice** :—The stage of deliberation is a stage of suspense or indecision. It is followed by the stage of *decision or choice*. After due deliberation one of the contending desires is selected or chosen to the exclusion of the others. This act is called the *act of choice, decision, or resolution*, the essence of which consists in that the agent identifies himself in anticipation with the object of the selected desire and with the particular line of action required to attain it. "While deliberating, we are making up our mind, and we do not know what our mind is going to be. When we have formed a decision, we have come to know our own mind. The conception of the Self has become fixed where it was previously indeterminate. The realisation of one line of conative tendency is now definitely anticipated as part of our future life-history so far at least as external conditions will allow of its execution. Opposing conative tendencies either cease to operate, or they appear only as difficulties or obstacles in the way of carrying out our decision. They are no longer regarded as possible motives of action. ... .. With the full emergence of the decision, the conflict of motives as such ceases. ... .. In a perfect volition, opposing impulses are not merely held in check ; they are driven out of the field. If they continue to resist, they do so as external obstacles to a volition already formed. They are no longer motives ; they are on the same footing with any

other difficulty in the way of attainment." ( Prof. Stout, *Manual of Psychology*, pp. 606—607 ). The selected desire is commonly called "*motive*", because it moves the agent to act in a particular way. If the realisation of the motive, thus formed, is delayed for some reason, the state of the mind in relation to the action is said to be a state of *resolution*.

It is to be added that when the motive is realised by means of an *overt act*, the act represents the external side, and desire, deliberation, choice or decision and motive constitute the internal side, of the whole volition.

From the above it is manifest that "the entire process is one of selective attention." The Will or the Self passes from one impulse or desire to another, and finally fixes its attention upon one to the entire exclusion of the others. Again, the act of choice is not an isolated act ; it is related to and determined by the nature of the Self as a whole. A contending desire is relative to a passing state of the Self, while the selected desire or motive is relative to the Self as a whole. Thus choice or selection is "an activity of moral apperception". The selected desire is incorporated with the entire life-history of the Self ; a new element comes to be added to the old. As Prof. J. Seth puts it ; "it is the entire man—the self—that makes the choice, and in doing so, he takes up a new moral attitude ; the entire moral being undergoes a subtle but real change." "A choice is therefore an organisation, which is at the same time an integration or assimilation, of impulses" or desires.

‘ We are now going to analyse and examine the nature

of desire, motive, intention, and end, which are the essential elements involved in volition.

(D) **Desire** :— ( See Book II, Chap. II ).

**Object of desire** :— ( See Book II, Chap. III, § 3, and Chap. IV, criticism, ii, 1 ).

(E) **Motive** :—We have found above that a *mere* desire is the motive for decision, and when selected by the will it becomes the motive for action. But this view is not universally accepted. It is therefore necessary to examine the different views maintained with regard to the true nature of motive. It is generally admitted that motive is that which *moves* the will, i. e. which *moves* or *induces* us to act in a particular way. Hence motive is the real determinant of an action. But if we analyse any act of will, we find two determining conditions or factors involved in it—*feeling* and *desire*. Now, the question is, which of them is the true motive, i. e. which of them really moves us to act ? Let us discuss them one by one.

(A) The determinists such as Hume, Bentham, Bain, and their followers urge that pleasure or relief from pain is the ultimate motive of all action ; and as pleasure is also the ultimate object of desire, it is easy to see that pleasure and motive are identical terms. In the conflict of motives the strongest one prevails and influences the will to act in a particular way. The conflict of motives is, therefore, a conflict of brute strength ; and the will is absolutely impotent to resist the strongest motive. The action follows as necessarily from the strongest motive as any physical event flows from its physical cause.



**Criticism:**—It is true that every voluntary action is preceded by feeling. Thus, a philanthropist's action is preceded by pleasure arising from the very idea of doing good to humanity. A thief feels pleasure at the very idea of possessing other's property. The very idea of success in examination gives pleasure to a student who directs all his activities towards the attainment of that end. But it is equally true that this feeling cannot be the motive of an action in the true sense of the term. The reasons are these :—

(a) The true motive, whatever it may be, must be that which implies an end that we mean to realise by an action. Hence motive always contains an *unrealised element*. But feeling as an actual state of mind—as a state which we actually have at any moment—is a *realised fact*, and therefore cannot be the true motive. Of course, in many cases we say that we are moved by feeling; we say that such and such action has been prompted by fear, anger, or jealousy. But it should be borne in mind that these actions are *not strictly voluntary*, because the will is here prompted to action by mere blind impulses, but not by any idea of an end pre-conceived by the self for its own satisfaction.

(b) In the second place, feeling *has no moral quality whatsoever*. The motive of a moral i. e. voluntary action must have moral value, a *non-moral* motive cannot determine an action which is *moral*. Feeling *qua* feeling is a psychological and therefore a physical, not an ethical fact. It is therefore as non-moral as any other physical event. Of course we say that the pleasure of

doing good to humanity is morally superior to that of stealing ; the pleasure of a saint is morally higher than that of a sinner. But here the moral excellence of the feeling arises not from the feeling itself as a state of mind, but from the nature of the object with which it is connected. Thus the thief's pleasure arises from stealing which itself is bad ; while the philanthropist's pleasure arises from doing good to humanity which itself is good. For these reasons feeling cannot be regarded as the proper motive of moral i. e. voluntary actions.

(c) Feeling is always a part of a concrete complex mental state ; it cannot exist apart from intellection and volition. Feeling, qua feeling i. e. regarded as an independent state is therefore an *abstraction* and thus a non-entity. ( See Book II, chap, IV, criticism § iv. ). So that it cannot be the motive of an action. What really moves us to action is always a concrete complex mental state of which feeling is only an element. The real motive contains therefore an element of feeling, but it is *more than* feeling and contains other elements cognitive and volitional.

(d) Pleasure is not the only object of desire. There are other objects which are equally or more desired. ( see Book II, chap. III, § 3 ). Hence even if it is admitted that pleasure can be the motive of action, it can be such only in some instances.

(e) If it is urged that though pleasure or relief from pain cannot directly be the motive of action, their idea can, our reply will be that the idea of pleasure or relief from pain is no pleasure, as the idea of man is no man.

So that even though the idea of pleasure can be regarded as the possible motive of action, pleasure as an actual state of feeling cannot.

(f) Again, if feeling cannot be the possible motive of action, the "conflict of motives" regarded as feelings must be meaningless expression. Still more meaningless is the assertion that "the strongest motive prevails"; for the strength or intensity of a motive i. e. feeling is determined by the nature of the complex mental state of which it is only an element; and this complex state has not only this intensity but also quality. What can therefore move us to action is not simply the greatest strength or intensity which a motive or feeling happens to attain in a conflict, but such intensity as related to the quality of the whole complex state of which the motive or feeling is only a part or element. Even if it is supposed that the expression "the strongest motive prevails" is admissible, an action determined by such motive cannot be regarded as *voluntary*, because whether the will chooses it or not, it will unfailingly lead to the action.

(g) Finally, feelings are so heterogeneous in nature that it is not always possible to estimate their respective strength. This is admitted by Dr. Bain. He says, "the only test of strength of motive is that the volition follows". If it is asked, how do we know that the volition follows the "strongest motive", not any other? the answer might be, because the motive is the strongest. Hence the argument either begs the question, or lands us in the tautology that the prevailing motive pre-

vails. ( see Martineau, Study of Religion, Vol II, pp. 219-20 ).

For these reasons feeling cannot be regarded either as the possible or the actual motive of voluntary action.

(B) May we then say that *desire* is the true motive? The upholders of the doctrine of freedom of the will urge that *mere* desire cannot be the actual motive of action ; for mere desire does not actually *move* us to action ; it simply *inclines* us to action, i. e. *tends* to move us to action. Hence, before we are actually moved to action—we resolve to act actually—a further step is necessary. This is the *choice* or *selection* of a desire. In all instances of voluntary action, as we have found, two or more desires compete with one another and draw us in different directions ; will then intervenes and selects or chooses one particular desire to the exclusion of the others, by attaining the object of which it means to satisfy the Self as a whole. Hence the desire thus selected or chosen and made an integral part of the Self as a whole, is the true motive of action. This motive may be a single desire, or a system of desires directed to a single ultimate object. But a desire cannot be a desire, cannot incline us to action, unless it is the expression of at least a passing phase of character ; and the motive being the selected desire, it is the expression of the character as a whole or the Self as a whole. So that, “seeing that motive is that which moves, and the will is not moved until it chooses, it seems more correct to define motive finally as the *idea of the object* which, through congruity with the character of the self, moves

the will." ( Prof. Muirhead, Elements of Ethics, p. 60 ). From this definition of motive it is manifest that the phrase "conflict of motives" is meaningless or even self-contradictory. The more correct expression is "conflict of desires."

(F) **Intention** :—The nature of motive necessarily leads to the consideration with regard to the nature of its relation to *intention*. At least in most instances the mental attitude towards a voluntary action is not constituted by motive alone. It is nearly always a complex mental structure of which motive forms only a part. The mental attitude *as a whole* is called *intention*. Thus intention is the entire psychological antecedent to voluntary action. What are, then, the distinction as well as the relation between motive and intention? "Bentham formulated this distinction by defining motive as that for the sake of which an action is done ; whereas the intention includes both that for the sake of which, and that in spite of which, anything is done. Intention is thus wider than motive. The former may be said to include the latter, but not *vice versa*. For while the end or consequent for the sake of which the action is done is, of course, intended, it is only part of the intention, and is sometimes distinguished from other part as the "ultimate intention". On the other hand, the consequences of the intermediate steps or the means adopted though part of the intention, are not part of the motive." ( Prof. Muirhead, Elements of Ethics, p, 61 ). Prof. Mackenzie, Dr. D' Arcy and others maintain the same view. Thus motive is precisely that part of intention—that idea of an end in view—to realise

which an action is performed ; and the rest of intention—the other ideas of ends in view—which, together with the former, constitutes the whole complex structure of intention, is, no doubt, preconceived and intended, but does not form part of motive, i. e. does not actually move the agent to action. Or to put it otherwise, motive is the *active* or *dynamical* part of intention ( the *persuasives* ), while the rest is more or less *passive* or *static*, or if tends to move the agent, it does so as *dissuasive* or *deterrent* forces. These facts can be made more clear by an illustration. Suppose that a father flogs his child for some misconduct. Here the whole mental attitude of the father towards the action is his whole intention which is constituted by the idea of good for the child and the idea of pain produced by the flogging. The former constitutes the real motive of his action, because he flogs the child for his good ; while the latter constitutes a part of his intention, not of his motive, inasmuch as he does not flog the child simply to produce the pain, although the production of it must be intended by him as the means to his real end. Similarly, a poor student who sells his coat to buy a book is actuated, not by the idea of selling his coat which is really repugnant to him, but by the idea of buying a book. Here the latter idea constitutes his real motive, while the former forms a mere part of his intention. Sometimes motive may be as wide as intention, i. e. all the foreseen or preconceived consequences may be the end of an action, and as such form the motive. But generally “the motive of an act is a part of the intention”

in the broadest sense of the term, but does not necessarily include the whole of the intention." As Dr. D'Arcy puts it : "the intention seems to include all the foreseen consequences of the act, the motive only those consequences which, in idea, form the end with which the agent identified himself. The agent may be well aware that his action will entail certain consequences to which he is indifferent, or which he may even dislike. Such consequences cannot be said to be unintentional, yet they are not any part of the motive. The idea of them does not move him to action." ( *A Short Study of Ethics*, p. 82 ).

The above is the prevalent view maintained by the great majority of the leading psychologists and ethical writers. But in my humble opinion it seems to be erroneous. For the reasons stated below, I completely agree with Prof. Dewey who holds that "the foreseen, the *ideal* consequences are the end of the act, and as such form the motive." ( *Outlines of Ethics*, p. 9 ). It is evident that he identifies motive with intention ; and this, I maintain, is perfectly true. It cannot be denied that the real mental antecedent to a voluntary action is the group of the foreseen or ideal consequences ; and like every other complex mental state the entire group of such consequences is a *system* or *organisation*. So that it is only by a force of imagination that we can abstract a part from the other part and the whole ; but really no such separation is possible. In a system or organism the nature of a part is entirely determined by its relation to the other parts and the whole. If such

be the case, motive which is only a part of intention (according to the above view) cannot be really separated from intention as a system or whole. Hence motive as defined by the theory has no separate or independent existence ; it can exist only in relation to intention ; apart from and independent of intention, it is *an abstraction* and *a non-entity*, and as such, cannot be regarded as an independent moving power capable of inciting us to act. Of course intention as a complex mental structure contains elements or factors some of which, as motive, taken by themselves, may tend to *move us forward*, while some others, taken by themselves, may tend to *move us backward* as dissuasive forces ; but none of them taken by itself constitutes the real motive of action. The real motive i. e. the moving power, is the intention taken as a whole and as a concrete mental state. Although there is thus an opposition between the two sets of elements involved in intention, yet this does not necessitate the regarding of one as the true motive, and the exclusion of the other from the category. The truth is, all the elements taken together as integral parts of a system or whole and determined in nature and constitution by their correlation constitute the true motive, because we are moved, not by mere abstraction but by concrete reality. Intention is thus the real psychological antecedent to action and as such constitutes the true motive. Motive and intention are therefore identical, if by motive is meant that which moves us to action. The self does not and cannot identify itself with only a part of its state called inten-



tion and leave itself unaffected by the other ; it is affected by the state : taken as a whole and identifies itself with that whole. This view is founded upon sound psychology ; and it is this view only, as we shall find in the sequel, which can satisfactorily explain a man's responsibility even for those foreseen consequences of his action which act as *dilcrrents*.

(G) **End** :—From the definition of conduct as an object of the moral judgment it is manifest that it has invariable reference to the idea of an end. What is, then, the precise nature of this end ? In examining the nature of desire we have found that the true object of desire is not a mere feeling, or even a thing regarded as something entirely external : “the true object is the act of satisfaction”. “When any desire is adopted by the man as that in the satisfaction of which he finds his realisation, the object of the desire becomes the end of the act. And so the end of any act is not a mere object or thing. The end is the act itself. It is the doing of the act which gives satisfaction. It is the exercise of a fitting activity which constitutes the realisation of self, the attainment of the end. Of course, this does not mean that there is no external thing or object involved in the satisfaction. The meaning is that such a thing cannot in itself be the end to which an act is relative. If any external thing or object is involved, then the end is that thing enjoyed by the self as an object of interest. The end must be, not mere self, or mere object, but self and object in conjunction ; in other words, activity.” ( Dr. D' Arcy, A Short Study of Ethics, p. 88 ).

(H) **Actions, moral and non-moral** :—( See Conduct in Chap I. of this Book. )

(I) **Springs of action** :—We have found above that the true spring or determinant of a moral or voluntary action is motive understood in its proper sense as described above, and that a motive arises out of a conscious impulse or desire as chosen or selected by the self as a possible means to its own realisation or satisfaction. Now, as every conscious impulse or desire is a possible motive for action, the classification of motives or springs of action may be supposed to be equivalent to that of the conscious impulses and desires themselves. Many writers such as Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Hobbes, Reid, Stewart, Calderwood, &c. have attempted such a classification with more or less success ; but a more elaborate, and complete classification has been given by Dr. Martineau in his Types of Ethical Theory ( Vol. II, Chap. V ) which is therefore summarised below. •

### **Springs of action classified :**

#### **Psychological order.**

Dr. Martineau first of all divides all the springs of action into two great classes. He argues that human nature, being a synthesis of animal and rational nature, is subject, in the first instance, to some blind primitive impulses which incite and impel us to action of which we have no rational foresight ; and that the presence, in our nature, of such impulses is indispensably necessary for the reasons that unless they were present in our

nature we could have no means of knowing how to act voluntarily, because a voluntary activity presupposes rational foresight of the precise kind of the activity and of its consequences which latter constitute the true motive of such activity. Voluntary activities must therefore be preceded by involuntary activities, i. e. activities prompted by the blind primitive impulses or tendencies in our nature. Hence as there are two classes of activity involuntary and voluntary, so there are two classes of springs of action—tendencies without and tendencies with, rational foresight. The former are usually called *impulses* and the latter *desires*. Dr. Matrineau calls the former *primary* and the latter *secondary* springs of action.

(1) **Primary springs of action** :—They are subdivided into four classes :—

(a) **Propensions** :—They are of first necessity “for the mere physical life in its individual maintenance or successive continuance.” They are three in number, two of which are called *appetites*—the *appetite for food* and the *appetite for sex*—and subserves the functions of our *organic life* ; the third is the “*tendency to physical activity* alternating with repose,” and is related to our *animal life*.

(b) **Passions** :—“They do not arise as forces from the needs of our own nature but are rather what we *suffer* at the hands of other objects.” These objects are always painful and uncongenial,—the causes of disturbance and injury ; and therefore invariably excite *repulsions* in us. They are three in number : “Towards an

object of natural aversion immediately before us we feel *Antipathy* ; towards that which has just hurt us, we experience *Anger* ; towards that which menaces us with evil, we look with *Fear*."

(c) **Affections** :—"They take us and form us into a certain frame of mind *towards* other persons, and operate therefore as *attractions*, and not, like the passions, as *repulsions*." They are also three in number : the first is the *parental* ; it is directed towards *offsprings* on the conditions that they must be *image of our essence* and the *continuation of our existence*, the absence of either of which changes it into some other feeling. The second is the *social* : it is "directed not only to our *like*, as the former, but to our equals, as respondent natures, holding up the mirror to our being, and at once taking us out of ourselves and sending us into ourselves." The third is the *compassionate* : it is excited at the spectacle of suffering of others.

(d) **Sentiments** :—The last class of the primary springs of action is called the *Sentiments*, "which direct themselves upon *ideal relations*, objects of apprehension or thought that are above us, yet potentially ours. As the Propensions carry us simply out of ourselves, we know not whither ; and the Passions repel from us our uncongentials, be they things or persons ; and the Affections draw us to our congenials, who can be only persons, unequal or equal ; so do the Sentiments pass out by aspiration to what is higher than ourselves, whether recognised as personal or not." They are also three in number : The first is *Wonder*, a primitive intellectual

impulse which prompts us to the search and knowledge of the hidden causes of things and events, and is thus the mother of all philosophy. The second is *Admiration*, a primitive *aesthetic* impulse, a sense of beauty, which is "directed on what is present to the mind, and is its homage to the given object" that is recognised as *beautiful*. The third is *Reverence*, a primitive *moral* impulse, a sense of *transcendent goodness* which is called forth into being by the presence or contemplation of either visible objects as saints and heroes, or the invisible God, who are respectively the partial and complete embodiment of such goodness or excellence.

(2) **Secondary springs of action : Desires :** These, like the primary ones, may be subdivided into four classes.—

(a) **Secondary Propensions :—**The three primary Propensions give rise to three secondary Propensions, or Desires, as the results of the action of reason upon them. The normal and moderate satisfaction of the appetites for food and sex gives birth to the *desires for food and sex* which may be collectively called "*Love of pleasure or sensual delights*"; while their undue and excessive satisfaction generates "Gluttony or Daintiness as the substitute for hunger, Drunkenness or Ebriety for Thirst, Epicurism for both" and Lust or Licentiousness for the appetite for sex. The tendency to physical activity, when normally and moderately satisfied, gives birth to the *Love of Exercise* and the *Love of Power*. The love of pleasure and the love of power combined generate what is called, the *Love of money*.

(b) **Secondary Passions** :—The three primary passions, growing self-conscious, produce three desires—the desire or “fondness for *antipathy*, or *pleasure in hating*, we call, as a feeling, *Ill-will* or *Malice*, and in its expression *Censoriousness* : the cherishing of *resentment*, *Vindictiveness* : of *fear*, *Suspiciousness* or *Mistrust*.”

(c) **Secondary Affections** :—The primary affections, when indulged in for the sake of pleasure they bring, degenerate into *Sentimentality* : the *parental* affection degenerates into the *Love for self-regarding play with the children* ; the *social* into the *love for the delights of social intercourse* ; and the *compassionate* into the *love for exciting or indulging pity*’.

(d) **Secondary Sentiments** :—Wonder in its secondary form passes into the *love for self-culture* which seeks the intellectual exercise for the pleasure it brings. “Admiration, at the secondary stage, becomes the *love of Art* or *Devotion to the pleasure of Taste*. (Aestheticism). Similarly, Reverence, when changes from the primary to the secondary stage, becomes *interest in religion*.”

This list, according to Dr. Martineau, contains all the simple radical impulses of human nature. But there are numerous other impulses which arise out of their combination in accordance with the *law of transference*, the *law of sympathy*, and the *law of distance*. The *love of praise* or *fondness for being admired*, for example, springs from the combination of such radical impulses as *admiration*, *social-affection* and *self-distrust* which last, again, is a compound impulse. Similarly, *Emulation* involves *love of Power*, *love of praise*, &c. The *love of*

*Money*, as we have found, is a compound of the *love of pleasure* and the *love of Power*.

**Criticism** :—(1) The above classification is evidently the classification of the primitive impulses and transformed impulses or desires ; and if it is confounded with the classification of the motives a great psychological error will be committed. And, indeed, such an error has been committed by Dr. Martineau ; he has confounded the classification of the impulses and desires, or what he calls the 'primary' and secondary springs of action, with that of the motives of voluntary action. As we have found above, these impulses and desires only *tend* to move us to action, i. e. they are motives for deciding or the *possible* motives for voluntary actions ; and it is only when they are freely selected or chosen by the self that they become *actual* motives for voluntary actions. If the case were different, i. e. if these impulses and desires did actually move the will to action quite independently of its selection or choice, the action would be as involuntary as the sleep-walking, the actions of an insane, or a person in a state of delirium. So that to confound the mere impulses and desires with the motives of voluntary actions is to confound the involuntary action with the voluntary ; or rather, this confusion totally abolishes the distinction between them.

(2) Another serious defect of his classification is that most of the primary springs are *feelings* or *emotions*, not impulses at all. Thus the primary passions—fear, anger and antipathy ; the primary affections—parental, social and compassionate ; and the primary sentiments—

wonder, admiration and reverence ; all are feelings or emotions. Although an impulse is attached to each of them, the impulse cannot be confounded with it. Thus when we seem to act out of fear, we do not really act out of it as a feeling, but out of the impulse attached to it. Similar is the case with other-emotions mentioned above. ( See Prof. Ladd, *Primer of Psychology*, p. 191, and also *Psychology*, p. 597 ). But, as we have found, feeling or emotion by itself cannot be the motive of voluntary action. ( See, above, § E, A ).

(3) His classification is based on the erroneous supposition that the human mind is a mechanical aggregate of distinct and independent faculties or powers. But, as Prof. Mackenzie has truly remarked, "modern psychology treats the human mind as an organic unity, and repudiates any hard and fast distinctions of faculties, such as seem to be implied in Dr. Martineau's list. The motives which he enumerates are not simple, but highly complex phenomena." Thus fear, for instance, is not a simple mental state, but a part of a complex mental state which contains other elements cognitive and volitional. Hence we cannot absolutely separate fear from this complex structure, and regard it as an entirely distinct and independent state ; it has significance and even existence only in relation to the whole ; but the constitution of this whole changes under different circumstances ; and so also does the nature of fear as a part of that whole. Hence fear in its nature and constitution is a changeable phenomenon ; and to regard it as a fixed and independent force is to commit a serious



psychological blunder. Exactly the same is true of the other emotions mentioned in the list.

(4) The truth is, the classification of the motives is in no case equivalent to that of the inner springs of action—impulses and desires. In fact even the classification of the impulses and desires cannot be carried out with much satisfaction. As Prof. Ladd remarks, "As to the Classification of the Impulses, psychology can do little.....There are as many impulses in all as are the various attitudes of felt attraction or repulsion before the different objects presented or represented in consciousness." (Psychology, p. 594). Again, with regard to the classification of Desires, he remarks: "If we were to begin our attempt at stating the Kinds of Desires by an analysis of the conscious life of different individuals, we should have to say that there are as many desires, for each individual, as there are kinds of objects which he has found productive of good." And then, after tentatively classifying the desires into four groups—viz, (1) Sensuous Desires, (2) Intellectual Desires, (3) Sentimental Desires and (4) Pathological Desires, he passes the following remarks: "The foregoing classification, like all attempts at classification, only serves to make more obvious the shifting and complex nature of all the principal forms of desire as they are actually experienced by the developed human consciousness." (Ibid, pp. 606—607).

The principle of the true classification of motives should, therefore, be sought, not in the inner springs of action, but in the nature of the ends in view for the

attainment of which the action is done. "What induces us to act", observes Prof. Mackenzie, "is the presentation of some end to be attained. Consequently, if we are to have a list of motives, this list should take the form rather of a classification of ends to be attained than of feelings that exist in our minds. Further, these ends would have to be arranged, not under any such abstract headings as "ambition" and the like, but in accordance with their actual, concrete nature." ( Manual of Ethics, p. 42 ). But this is practically equivalent to saying that the attempt at any classification of motives is altogether futile ; for the concrete ends to realise which a man acts are numerous, or rather innumerable and widely different at different times even under similar circumstances ; and again, even under same circumstances, no two men act with exactly the same end in view inasmuch as their characters which determine the nature of the ends are different. Hence we conclude that it is impracticable and of very little importance to attempt a classification of motives.

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## CHAPTER V.

### Moral Consciousness.

( Elements of the Moral Consciousness, Intellectual, Emotional, and Volitional : Right and Wrong ; Moral Law : Good and Evil ; The Highest Good. )

I. **The characteristics of Moral Consciousness** :—Consciousness signifies the mind's awareness of its own activities and of the states and processes arising out of those activities. It is therefore the general and fundamental condition of them ; and implies, at least directly, a relation between the mind as the subject and those activities, states and processes as the objects of such awareness. *Moral consciousness* is only a particular and *unique* kind of consciousness ;—*it is the consciousness of the morality of acts and agents*. The activities, states and processes of mind can be viewed from two standpoints : we can consider them from the standpoint of their *origin* and *development* ; and also from the standpoint of their *value* and *meaning*. They are facts of mind ; so we can pass judgment *about* them, tracing up their origin and development, and stating their agreement, difference, &c. But they are not *mere* facts devoid of any significance ; they have value or worth, and meaning ; so we can pass judgment also *upon* them, i. e. with regard to their value and meaning. We are not only conscious of the mental facts *as* facts, discerning only their psychological conditions and relations,

but also of their value and meaning ; and in going to judge them we compare them with some “norms” or ideals—viz, in the case of cognition, with the “norm” of Truth ; in the case of feeling, with that of Beauty ; and in the case of volition, with that of Good;—in order to determine whether they come up to or fall short of those ideals, i. e. whether they are true or false, beautiful or ugly, good or bad. Now, *the consciousness of the morality, i. e. the rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness*, of our states and acts is known as *Moral consciousness*. The analysis and interpretation of this unique kind of consciousness and its various implications constitute the *primary function* of Ethics ; because, in the first place, only by analysing the moral consciousness we can discover its contents and implications and so the problems that Ethics has to solve ; and in the second place, only by interpreting and vindicating their legitimacy Ethics can vindicate its claim to be a science and philosophy. It is therefore, first of all, necessary to carefully analyse Moral Consciousness.

**The analysis of Moral Consciousness :—**

Like any other “complex psychosis” or state of consciousness, Moral Consciousness is also a complex structure ; it also contains three fundamental elements, *cognitive, affective and active or volitional*.

(A) **The cognitive elements** :—Regarded as a cognitive state Moral consciousness reveals itself in the form of a judgment, viz, the *judgment of the rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness of acts and states*. It is *discriminative* inasmuch as it distinguishes the

“right” from the “wrong”, the “good” from the “bad” ; it is also *integrative* inasmuch as it integrates the “right” with the “wrong”, the good with the “bad”. The knowledge of the “right” is impossible without that of the “wrong”, the knowledge of the “good” without that of the “bad” and *vice versa*. An act is known to be right only when we know that its opposite is wrong, and conversely. They are in fact *correlative* terms and are thus known together. Again, the knowledge of something as right or wrong, good or bad, involves the knowledge of a norm, or standard or ideal by reference to and in accordance with which such knowledge is determined and obtained. But this does not imply that when we discern something to be right or wrong, good or bad, we are always *explicitly* conscious of the moral ideal, i. e. we distinctly refer the thing to that ideal. But neither is it true that we are always distinctly conscious of right and wrong, good and bad. We spontaneously and implicitly discern the moral quality of our acts and states ; and it is only when we reflect about them that we come to distinctly know their moral value and meaning ; and further reflection reveals the fact that such moral value and meaning are ultimately referred to a standard or ideal in relation to which only they acquire their being. This is true also of our ordinary knowledge. In most instances we know a thing without knowing, at the sametime, its relation to the self and other objects of nature ; but only by reflection we come to know that without those relations the thing cannot even exist.

We have said above that Moral Consciousness, regarded as a cognitive state, expresses itself in the form of a judgment, and that it is a judgment *upon*, not *about*, the mental facts. So that the moral judgment implies an *object* upon which, and a *subject* or *standard* in accordance with which, it is passed. But this is not all. A moral judgment implies also a *mode* or *method* in which we pass it. This question leads on to the investigation of the ultimate nature of the *Moral Faculty* or *Conscience* which enables us to pass such judgment. Again, the consideration of the moral judgment cannot be dissociated from the consideration of the *Moral Law*. Lastly, the moral judgment presupposes some fundamental *conditions* or *postulates* upon which it is based. Regarded as a judgment, Moral consciousness, then, involves the following problems:—

- (a) The nature of the *object* of the moral judgment.
- (b) „ „ „ the *mode* or *method* of the moral judgment.
- (c) „ „ „ the *Moral Faculty* or *Conscience*.
- (d) „ „ „ the *Moral Law*.
- (e) „ „ „ the *Moral Ideal*.

(B) **The affective elements** :—But Moral Consciousness is not *merely* a judgment ; it contains also a distinctive element of *feeling* or *affection*. Like every other judgment, the moral judgment is accompanied or followed by a characteristic element of feeling. We cannot pass a moral judgment upon an act or state,

when it is right or good, without *approving* it ; nor can we do so, when it is wrong or bad, without *disapproving* it. Thus these feelings of *approbation* and *disapprobation* are the necessary accompaniments or consequents of all moral judgment. But these characteristic feelings, or what are called *Moral Sentiments*, should not be regarded as the *test* or *criterion* of the validity or invalidity of the moral judgment. They are *mere* accompaniments or consequents, and nothing more. So that they are entirely dependent upon the moral judgment. If the moral judgment is really incorrect, but believed to be correct ; or really correct, but believed to be incorrect, yet the corresponding feeling will be that of approbation, or of disapprobation. Just as the mere presence of a belief in the mind is no sure indication of the correctness of an intellectual judgment, so the mere presence of a moral sentiment is no infallible mark of the validity or invalidity of a moral judgment. Hence, regarded as an *affective* state, Moral Consciousness involves the following problems :—

(a) The nature and origin of the moral sentiments.

(b) The cause of the divergence of moral opinions.

(c) **The active or volitional elements :—**

Moral Consciousness involves not only an element of cognition and feeling but also an element of activity or volition. This active or volitional element exhibits itself in the form of an *impulse to do what is right and avoid what is wrong*. Moral Consciousness is not merely a passive awareness of the moral value of actions, making the agent remain a passive and indifferent specta-

tor, but it induces him to follow that line of action which is discerned to be right or good, and to avoid its opposite. This tendency to do the right and avoid the wrong, though feeble in the beginning or in the undeveloped mind, becomes very strong as moralisation increases, and ultimately completely dominates the whole of our life. This tendency or impulse is directly and closely connected with that striking phase of our moral life which is known as the *consciousness of duty or moral obligation*. When we discern an action to be right, we think it our *duty* or feel *obligation* to do it, and to avoid its opposite. But the consciousness of duty or moral obligation naturally leads to some questions : Why are we bound or obliged to do the right and avoid the wrong, and to whom is such obligation due ? These questions lead on therefore to the problems regarding the *authority or imperativeness* and the *source* of the *Moral Law*. Again, the notion of *duty* is closely connected with the notions of *right*, *merit*, and *responsibility*, which should therefore be also treated of separately. Moreover, as the constant performances of duties generate good habits of will called *virtues*, it is also necessary to inquire into the relation between *duty* and *virtue*. Thus Moral Consciousness, regarded as an active state, involves the following problems :—

- (a) The source of *moral obligation*.
- (b) The nature of *moral authority*.
- (c) The meaning of *Right*, *Merit*, *Responsibility*, and their relation to *Duty*.
- (d) The relation of *Duty* to *Virtue*,



Before we proceed to investigate the nature of the several problems discovered by the analysis of Moral Consciousness we should determine the meaning of some terms used in the statement of the moral judgment. We have found that the moral judgment is expressed in the form : "such and such act is right or wrong, good or bad". Now, it may be asked, what is the precise meaning of these terms, "right and wrong," "good and bad" as used in the moral judgment ? Before we proceed to answer this question we should remark that these two sets of words are historically connected with two rival ethical theories that try to interpret the moral judgment from two different points of view. The set of terms "right and wrong" is exclusively used by that ethical school which is commonly known as the intuitionists, or which regards Law as the standard of the moral judgment ; while the set of terms "good and bad" is exclusively used by that ethical school which regards the *Summum Bonum* or the supreme good either in the form of pleasure ( Hedonism ), or in the form of perfection ( Perfectionism ) as the moral ideal. Let us now go to investigate the meaning of these terms "right and wrong", good and bad" as used in Ethics.

**II Right and wrong** :—The word "right" is etymologically connected with Latin *rectus* = "straight" or "according to rule". The corresponding Greek word is *Dikaïos* = "according to rule", which is connected with the root *dic* = to point or direct. Thus, a conduct is right when it is "according to rule or law". The word "wrong" signifies, therefore, what is against or in viola-

tion of a rule or law. Thus a conduct is wrong when it violates, or is inconsistent with a rule or law. Hence in this wider signification an act is right or wrong according as it is, or is not, in agreement with an established rule or law. But, as Ethics recognises only the *Moral Law*, the words "right and wrong" as used in Ethics signify what is, or is not, in accordance with the Moral Law. This is particularly the view of the Rigorists or Intuitionists who maintain that the ultimate criterion of right and wrong in conduct is its agreement or disagreement with the Moral Law. Even those, who recognise a different standard, viz, the *Summum Bonum* or the supreme good, whether in the form of "the greatest amount of pleasure" ( Hedonism ), or "the perfection of human nature" ( Perfectionism, Eudæmonism, Energism ), admit that though the highest good is the ultimate standard of right and wrong in conduct, the proximate or immediate standard is the Moral Law, because it is the means to the realisation of the former. Of course there is a class of Intuitionists, such as Dr. Martineau, who maintains that we discern the rightness or wrongness of actions *directly* and *intuitively* without trying to discover their agreement or disagreement with the moral laws, which are, according to them, nothing but generalisations from particular instances of intuition. ( See Book II, Chap. I, Inductive Intuitionism ). It is, no doubt, true that we know the particular before we know the general ; but, yet, it cannot be denied that the particular are explicable only by reference to the general ; and when we know the nature of the general

we become sure of the nature of the particular. In the present instance also though sometimes we may discern the moral value of acts directly and immediately, yet, we become sure of it when we know that these acts are in agreement or disagreement with the moral laws. So that we conclude that the view as maintained by the Intuitionists is, generally and on the whole, that the Moral Law is the ultimate test or criterion of the moral value of actions. Thus we find that the notions of right and wrong are closely allied to the notion of the Moral Law. Hence we should next consider the nature of the Moral Law.

**The Moral Law :—(a) The meaning of law :—**

The term “law” is etymologically connected with A. S. *lagu* which is derived from *licgan* = to lie. So that “law” originally means “that which is *laid*, set or fixed.” i. e. “a rule of action established by authority”, or more explicitly, it “is, in its primary signification, the authoritative expression of human will enforced by power.” (Argyll, *Reign of Law*, Chap. II.) Thus the term “law” has three implications :—(1) it is a rule of being or conduct ; (2) it is established by authority ; and (3) it is enforced by power possessed by the authority.

**(b) The Characteristics of the Moral Law**

—If we accept this original signification then we can apply the term “law” only to the *Political laws* or the laws of the state, But there is another class of rules to which also we apply it. They are the rules in accordance with which the objects of nature *behave*, or the changes or events *follow* one another. These rules are

called the *laws of nature*. Thus we have two classes of laws : the *laws of the state* and the *laws of nature*. But in the latter case, the idea of authority and enforcement by power is not usually recognised, although some theologians interpret them as the expressions of Divine Will enforced by Divine Power. Besides this difference, there are some essential distinctions between these two classes of laws. The *political laws* are *changeable*, *violable* and *particular* or *limited* ; while the *natural laws* are *unchangeable*, *inviolable* and *universal* or *all-pervading*. But what is universal or all-pervading being scarcely distinguishable from what is unchangeable and necessary, the different classes of laws may be distinguished by two characteristic marks—viz, (1) *changeable* or *unchangeable*. (2) *Violable* or *inviolable*. Adopting these two principles we can classify all the laws, whether political, natural or otherwise, in four ways :—(1) laws that are *changeable* and *violable* ; (2) laws that are *changeable* but *inviolable* ; (3) laws that are *unchangeable* but *violable* ; (4) laws that are *neither changeable nor violable*. From this classification it is evident that the political laws fall under the first head, the natural laws under the fourth, and most of the laws of political economy under the second. The last class of laws is sometimes called *hypothetical*, inasmuch as they remain binding so long as certain conditions are present and remain unchanged. “The laws of Ethics, however, must on the whole be regarded as belonging to the third class. *They cannot be changed, but they may be violated.*” It is, no doubt, true that some moral rules may change with the chang-

ing conditions of people, but the essential and primary moral laws are all constant and so necessary or universal ;—they are “applicable not only to all kinds of men but to all rational beings.” So that we can safely infer that the moral laws are, on the whole, *unchangeable*. But they seem to be *violable*. We cannot, of course, change a moral law such, for instance, as “honesty is good” into its opposite, viz “honesty is bad”, but we can violate it—we can do, for instance, a dishonest act. But there is a view according to which we cannot even violate a moral law, because the violation of a moral law necessarily brings punishment along with it some time or other—here or hereafter. This doctrine, as Prof. Mackenzie remarks, is metaphysical rather than ethical. Because “it is a fact about the constitution of the world, not a moral law. A moral law states something that *ought* to happen, not something that *must* happen.”

Similar is the case with the laws of other normative sciences. Thus the fundamental laws of aesthetics, or the essential principles of architecture, navigation, rhetoric, cannot be changed, but can be violated. We cannot change the laws of logic or the rules of correct thinking, but we very often violate them. Thus the laws of all normative sciences—ethics, logic, aesthetics—may be styled *commands* or *imperatives*. The laws of the state are also commands or imperatives, but they differ from the former in being both changeable and violable,

Thus we get two broad classes of laws : (1) *Commands* or *imperatives*, (2) *uniformities*. Some of the

former class are changeable, while others are unchangeable, but both are violable ; whereas the latter class is both unchangeable and inviolable. Now an important question suggests itself : Are all these laws *universal* ? It is obvious that the political laws are not universal, because they are restricted to particular countries and peoples. The uniformities of nature are universal. The laws of those normative sciences as logic, aesthetics and all the cognate sciences as architecture, navigation, rhetoric &c. are *not universal in application*. They are, as we have said, *hypothetical*. Because their validity depends upon the presence of some conditions ; and so long as those conditions remain present and unchanged those laws remain also binding ; but change those conditions, they will also change. For instance, if we like to be self-consistent, we must abide by the rules of consistency, otherwise not. On the contrary, the laws of Ethics are universally binding upon men as rational beings. Man is moral, because he is rational ; and as he cannot escape his rational nature, so he cannot escape his moral nature ; as he is by nature rational, so he is by nature moral. The moral laws have absolute authority, because they are deduced from the supreme and absolute end of human life which is independent of man's choice ; but the laws of other normative sciences derive their authority from ends which are relative to and dependent on the choice of man. Hence the laws of Ethics differ from all other laws in being *not hypothetical* but *categorical*. "The moral law, then, is unique. It is the only categorical imperative."•

We can then summarise the characteristics of the Moral Law in the following way : (1) The Moral Law is *unchangeable* and *necessary* ; (2) it is *violable* ; (3) it is *universal* ; (4) it is a *command* or *imperative* ; (5) it is *categorical*, not hypothetical ; (6) it is *unique* and *absolute*, there being no other law parallel to it. ( See Prof. Mackenzie's *Manual of Ethics*, pp. 10—17 ; and also Prof. Janet's *Theory of Morals*, pp. 152—165 ).

The above is the view generally held by the Rigorists or Intuitionists. These writers identify the ultimate standard of morality with the Moral Law. But the Hedonists and the Perfectionists subordinate the Moral Law to the supreme Good and regard it as the mere means to the realisation of the latter, which is the really ultimate standard of the morality of conduct. According to these ethical schools the ultimate Moral Law assumes the following three forms :—(1) Realise and perfect the *rational* self ; or to express it otherwise :—“Do what is conformable to Nature, i. e. do what is in harmony with the course of nature or the universal reason of the world.” ( Stoics ) ; “Act so that the maxim of thy will can likewise be valid at all times as the principle of a universal legislation,” ( Kant ). ( Rigorism ). (2) Realise and perfect the *sentient* self : or to express it otherwise, “Aim at the greatest total happiness or the greatest pleasure on the whole, whether in our own experience or in that of the race.” ( Hedonism ). (3) Realise and perfect the *total* self ; or to express it otherwise, “Be a person and respect others as persons.” ( Hegel ). ( Perfectionism, Eudæmonism, Energism ). All other moral

laws are directly or indirectly derivable from the ultimate Moral Law.

Besides the terms "right," "wrong," and "law" we have other words bearing close and obvious affinity to them. Thus we have "the vocabulary of right, e. g. "duty" that which is owed or which we are bound to do ; "obligation," that which binds us ; "ought or owed ; "responsibility," or answerableness as before a legal tribunal, &c." ( Prof. Muirhead, Elements of Ethics, p. 66 ).

III. **Good and bad** :—The term "good" is etymologically connected with German *gut* and with the root *gath* found in Greek *agathos*, meaning "serviceable or valuable for an end". In this signification of the term "good" a thing is good in so far as it is a means to or serviceable for, an end in view. According to its derivation the term "good" is used as an adjective standing for a quality of the means to an end. Thus health is good, because it possesses a quality by virtue of which it is a proper means to an end, viz, the preservation of the physical organism. In this sense a thing is good if it is a means to, or serviceable for, an end, it does not matter whether the end itself is good or not. But, as we shall see later on, in Ethics the goodness of something is determined by the goodness of the end to which it is a means. Thus a conduct is good, not because it is simply a means to an end, but because the end itself is good. Hence, at least, from the standpoint of morality, "the good" should be defined as standing for "that quality in the desirable objects on account of which they are



held to be proper objects of pursuit." What the precise nature of such quality is—whether it is pleasure or 'worth or excellence'—we shall consider in the sequel. But whatever that quality is, it is certain that it admits of degrees—it admits of being distinguished as *better and worse, best and worst*. We say honesty is better than wealth ; kindness, is better than cruelty ; &c.

The term "bad" or "evil" bears the opposite meaning; it means what is not serviceable for an end, or it possesses a quality on account of which it is shunned, or does not form a proper object of pursuit. Thus we say that theft, murder, lying, cruelty, &c. are bad or evil, because they possess qualities on account of which they are shunned or not pursued. This does not imply that all people shun them, but that even those, who pursue them, regard them as good. As, for instance, a thief pursues theft, because he regards it as good. Like "good", "bad" or "evil" also admits of degrees. As all things, that are good, are not equally such, so all things, that are bad or evil, are not equally such. Thus, though cruelty and murder both are bad, yet, the latter is worse than the former.

Just as we have a vocabulary of "right" so also we have a vocabulary of "good" : e. g. "virtue" means "the quality of fitness in a *man* ; "worth" means "value for an end", &c.

**The classification of goods** :—So long we have used the term "good" as an adjective. But the objects that possess the quality denominated "the good", are commonly called "goods". Thus health, wealth,

kindness, &c. are called goods, because they possess the quality called "the good". Then, "goods" used as substantives may be classified in the following way :—

(1) Some goods are *material*, e. g. health, wealth, &c. and others are *immaterial*, e. g. honesty, veracity, courage, justice, wisdom, &c.

(2) Some goods are *personal*, i. e. desired by a person for his own sake ; and others are *impersonal*, i. e. desired by a person for the sake of others. But this distinction is not absolute inasmuch as the same good may be personal at one time and impersonal at another, or personal and impersonal at the same time. Thus wealth may be desired by a person for his own sake at one time and for the sake of others at another time ; or it may be desired for his own sake and for the sake of others at the same time. Again, even when we desire an object for the sake of others, we do so because such desire satisfies our own self also : otherwise we cannot desire it at all. So that ultimately all goods are *personal*. But, yet, as we cannot overlook the distinction between our own self and the selves of others, the distinction between the personal and impersonal good is not wholly unimportant.

(3) Another important distinction is that between *good as means* and *good as end*. Thus kindness is a good ; and the means by which kindness is cultivated and developed comes also to be regarded good in accordance with the law of transference. For this reason acts of kindness also are goods. Kindness is, thus, *good as end*, while an act of kindness is *good as means*.

(4) The above distinction leads to another very important distinction, viz. the distinction between the *relative good* and the *absolute good*. The relative good is that which is sought, not for its own sake, but for the sake of an ulterior end. The absolute good is that which is sought, not for the sake of any ulterior end, but for its own sake, there being nothing superior to or higher than it for whose sake it can be sought. Thus wealth is a relative good, because it is sought for the sake of an ulterior end such as acquirement of power, fame, &c. According to Hedonism pleasure or happiness and according to Perfectionism perfection or excellence of human nature, are the absolute good, because everything else is sought as means to its attainment, but it is not sought as means to anything else. What the true nature of the absolute good is, we shall discuss in the sequel. ( See Book II, Chap. III—VI ).

That there must be an absolute good can be easily seen if we examine the nature of the objects popularly recognised as good. All of them can be shown to be merely *relative good* ; because being finite or limited in nature they always point to something else to which they are subordinate and means ; and ultimately we are compelled to stop at an object which cannot be pointed out as subordinate and means to anything else. This object put at the top of the infinite scale of gradation among the means and ends is called the *absolute good*. Aristotle in his ethics writes thus : "If then there be some one end of all that we do, for which we wish for its own sake, while for other things we wish

only in so far as they are means to this—that is to say, if every object of choice be not a means to something further, in which case the chain of means would be infinite, and our desires empty and objectless,—it is evident that this end will be the chief and supreme good.” J. S. Mill also admits that there is an ultimate good. “We cannot prove,” writes he, “that anything is excellent except by proving that it serves as a means for attaining another thing which is itself recognised as being excellent without any proof. • The art of music is good, for the reason among others, that it produces pleasure ; but what proof is it possible to give that pleasure is good ?” Indeed it is impossible to say that something is good, or better than some other thing unless and until we refer it to a test or criterion which itself must be ultimate or absolute, inasmuch as if it were relative like the former, it had, in its turn, to be referred to a still higher test or criterion, and so on. Thus we must assume or take for granted the existence of the absolute good as the ultimate test or criterion of goodness of objects.

### **The characteristics of the absolute good :**

From the above we can gather the essential characteristics of the absolute good in the following way :—(i) The absolute good must be *one*. It cannot be more than one inasmuch as if there are two or more absolute goods they must be either *consistent* or *inconsistent* with one another. In the former case, they will be the correlative aspects of one good, which, then, will be the really ultimate good. In the latter case, as we cannot

desire inconsistent objects at the same time and in the same sense, when we choose one of them we must sacrifice and subordinate the rest to it, thus making it the really ultimate good and the rest only subordinate and relative.

(ii) From the above it is manifest that the absolute good must be good *intrinsically*, i. e. desired for its own sake, not for the sake of anything else.

(iii) It is also the *highest good* or *Summum Bonum*, because there is no other good that is superior to it ; and for this reason it is the *common good*—the good that is desired by all—the attainment of which forms the ultimate end of all human activities.\*

(iv) It is the *personal good*. We have found above that it is the common good, and for this very reason it is also a personal good, i. e. a good which is desired by every person for himself. Or in other words, it is a good for each and for all at the same time. This personal and universal character of the absolute good is based upon the essentially spiritual and social nature of man. ( See Book II, Chap. VI ).

(5) So long we have proceeded with the supposition that the term "good" bears only one meaning. "The term "good" has, in fact, two meanings ; and we must, with Leibniz, distinguish two kinds of good, *natural* and *moral*. Kant also recognises the distinction between two kinds of good—the natural good and the moral good. The natural good are those which are sought either for their own sake, or for the sake of others. Thus health, wealth, speech, industry, science, a taste

for the beautiful, the affections, such tendencies as the first promptings of kindness, moderation, modesty, and sincerity, talents, beauty, vigor, wit, &c. all are natural goods. What, then, is the *moral good* ? "*Moral good seems, then, to be nothing but the good use of natural goods*, and plainly presupposes that there is already something which is in itself naturally good : otherwise we could not understand why one action should be good rather than another. Every human action has an object : it is always intended to procure or to destroy, either in ourselves or in others, something determinate and concrete. For example, to save a friend consists in saving either his life or his fortune ; to instruct him is to increase the sum of his knowledge ; to speak the truth is to employ words in the service of thought. If we assume that these different objects are in themselves absolutely characterless then we cannot see why these various actions should be better than their opposites. To free moral action from all effective objects is to destroy the action itself. If all the goods in the world, including those of the soul, had in themselves no more value than a pebble, it would be impossible to understand why we ought to seek for some and avoid others. A moral law which should command us to break stones without any objects, for the sake simply of bending our wills, would be a law void of all content, and consequently senseless." ( Prof. Janet, *Theory of Morals*, p 31 ). From this it is manifest that the objects of human pursuits are the natural goods, while conducts or actions which consist in the good use of the natural

goods in order to attain the supreme good are the moral goods. Thus wealth is a natural good, but its good use in order to attain the supreme good, is a moral good, and its bad use is a moral evil.

But the distinction drawn between the physical and moral good seems to me *not absolute*. We have proved that there is only one absolute good. What is the nature of this absolute good ? Is it physical, or moral, or both at the same time ? It cannot be simply physical, because, then, the moral good will be outside it and thus will be another absolute good, which is absurd. For the same reason it cannot be simply moral also. Thus it is both physical and moral at the same time. This can be proved in another way : all goods physical or moral are such in so far as they are means, direct or indirect, to the absolute good as the ultimate end ; thus they derive their character of good from that of the absolute good. Hence the absolute good is both physical and moral at the same time. Now, if this inference is valid, it is manifest that there cannot be any essential and absolute distinction between the physical and the moral good. They represent only two stadpoints from which we view the nature of the good. Thus kindness is a physical good, because it is a good quality, of the soul, i. e. a quality which is direct or indirect means to the absolute good as the ultimate end of all human pursuit ; but it can be a means only when it is *rightly* used ; a *mere* kindness has no value, is not good at all unless and until it is *used* to attain the absolute good. Thus a physical good taken by itself is an abstraction ;

and so is the moral good. A *concrete* good is a physical good that is rightly used i. e. used to attain the absolute good and is, thus, a physical and moral good at the same time. Hence the distinction between these two classes of good seems to me, after all, *relative* only.

(6) Another important distinction that we draw when we make use of the term "good" is that between *human good* and *cosmic good*. Human good is that which is the object of human desire or the end of human activity ; while cosmic good is that which serves the cosmic purpose, or realises the Final End of the world and is not therefore realised by human desire and rational activity. In short it is "the final cause or the end of being for every object." But this distinction too is not absolute. Man being an integral part of the world system, human good is included in cosmic good, though not identical with it.

**Theories of the absolute good :—** (See Book II, Chap. III—VI ).

(IV) **Right and good :—**In their radical signification "right" and "good" seem to be different ; and so also in their ordinary application. Thus we ordinarily say that "kindness" is good, but scarcely say that it is right ; and we always say that a kind act is both good and right. From this it is evident that the term "good" is applied both to action and the object of action ; whereas the term "right" is applied to action only. Hence the notion of "good" is wider than that of "right" and includes it. Thus the notions of "good" and "right" are *not incongruous*. What is right or



"according to rule or law" is found, after due analysis, to be such as to realise an end or good. Thus a particular kind act is right, because it is in accordance with the law "*all kind acts are right.*" But if it is asked how can we show that "all kind acts are right" ? the answer would be either that we discern the truth of the law *directly* and *intuitively*, or that we recognise its truth because it is a *means* to the realisation of the ultimate good or end of human life. The former is the view entertained by the Rigorists or Intuitionists and the latter by the Hedonists and Eudæmonists. Thus according to the latter class of writers "right" is subordinate to "the highest good," as a means is subordinate to an end ; whereas, according to the former, at least in its *extreme* form, "right" is identified with "the highest good" and is, thus, regarded as "the only good"; while in its *moderate* form two classes of goods—the physical and moral good—are distinguished ; but the former is made subordinate to the latter and the latter is identified with "the highest good."

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## Chapter VI.

### The object of Moral Judgment.

**I. The nature of Moral Judgment :—**All judgments, as we have found, may be arranged under two classes : (a) judgments of facts or *factual* judgments, (b) judgments upon facts or judgments of *value* or *judicial* judgments. The former simply state the conditions, temporal and spatial relations, &c. of facts, while the latter describes the *value* and *meaning* of those facts by reference to some "norms" or standards. All positive sciences are concerned with the former class of judgments, whereas all normative sciences with the latter. The moral judgment belongs to the latter class ; it consists in the description of the moral value and significance of facts by reference to the standard or ideal of moral excellence, just as the logical or intellectual and the æsthetic judgments are the statements of the agreement or disagreement of facts with the standard or ideal of Truth and Beauty respectively. But it should be borne in mind here that the moral judgment is not passed upon all facts, but only on those facts that are called *human conducts*, i. e. the voluntary actions of man. ( see, above, Chap. I. pp. 8—9 ).

Another important question in this connection suggests itself : Is moral judgment *intuitive* or *discursive*, *perceptual* or *inferential* ? Two rival theories have been

offered for answering this question. The upholders of what Dr. Sidgwick has called *Perceptual* or *Inductive Intuitionism* are of opinion that the moral judgment is *intuitive, perceptual*; that when we discern an action to be right or wrong, we do so intuitively or immediately just as we discern the quality of a thing directly or immediately in our perception; that thus the perception of the moral quality of an action which is expressed in the moral judgment is of the same character as the perception of the physical quality of a thing. (Butler, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Adam Smith, Martineau, &c.). In very recent times Dr. Bradley seems to maintain a similar view. "Moral judgments," holds he, "are not discursive, but intuitive". (Ethical Studies, p. 176). The upholders of what Dr. Sidgwick has called *Deductive Intuitionism*, on the other hand, consider the moral judgment as *discursive, mediate, inferential*; the discernment of the moral quality of an action, of which the moral judgment is an explicit statement, is not intuitive or immediate, but inferential or mediate; what we directly perceive is the action itself as an occurrence in time and space, and the knowledge of its moral quality is the result of comparison of the act with a moral law discerned intuitively, or some other standard of right and wrong such as pleasure or moral excellence. (Aristotle, Reid, Stewart, Calderwood, the hedonists, the Perfectionists, &c.). "Knowledge of moral quality in an action," says Prof. Calderwood, "is not of the nature of Perception..... Knowledge of moral quality is of the nature of judgment. The knowledge of an action as fact is one thing,

the knowledge of that action as right or wrong is another thing. The former involves simple perception, the latter is attained only by comparison.....Moral judgment does not result from the comparison of individual objects, but from the comparison of a particular act with a general truth." Thus, "every accurate moral judgment affirms a particular application of a general moral truth. It contains a principle valid as a law of activity, not only in the particular case, but in all similar cases ; not only at this time but at all times ; a principle whose validity is in its own nature..... It is therefore an essential feature of a valid moral judgment that it carries in it a general truth." ( Hand Book of Moral Philosophy, thirteenth edition, pp. 26—29 ). " It ( i. e. the moral judgment ) does not merely state," maintains Prof. Mackenzie, "the nature of some object, but compares it with a standard, and by means of this standard pronounces it to be good or evil, right or wrong." (Manual of Ethics, p. 127).

The absolute distinction between the intuitive and the inferential character of the moral judgment cannot certainly be maintained. As in the intellectual sphere, so in the moral, intuition and inference do not represent two absolutely distinct kinds of knowledge, but only two correlated stages of it. In both an element of judgment is present : only in the one it is *implicit*, and in the other *explicit*. But every judgment in which two ideas are combined presupposes a general principle of combination ; and we become sure of the truth of an intuition when we are able to show its agreement with a general principle. This is true not only in the intellectual per-

ception,\*but also in the moral perception. In the intellectual perception we apply some general principles, technically called the categories of understanding, such as substance and accident, cause and effect, reciprocity, &c ; but in ordinary instances their application is *implicit* or unconscious ; only after logical analysis and philosophical reflection we come to detect their presence and consider their application indispensably necessary. Without differentiation and integration no knowledge is possible ; yet in most instances we are not conscious of these processes. Likewise, in the moral perception, we apply a general principle to an act, or compare it with a moral standard, even though in most instances such application or comparison is *implicit* or unconscious ; and only after due reflection we come to understand that the validity of the perception or intuition rests upon the possibility of the application of a universal principle, or of the comparison of it with a moral ideal. The truth, therefore, is that in all simple and ordinary instances we discern the moral quality of an action without going through any distinct and explicit process of reasoning ; but in all complicated and difficult cases, we distinctly and explicitly apply a general principle to an act, or compare it with a moral ideal.

**II. The object of Moral Judgment :—**The object upon which we pass the moral judgment is, as we have found, *conduct* or *voluntary action*. ( See, pp. 4—6 of this Book ). But voluntary action is a complex whole ; it is that which is performed with an end in view—an end in the attainment of which the agent finds his satis-

faction. Again, this end is not always simple, but in most instances complex, i. e. constituted by several ends, one of which being primary and the rest being subordinated or subsidiary to it. Each of these ends is the production of some consequence which affects the welfare of other men for good or ill, and ultimately that of the world as a whole. Thus conduct involves two factors : (i) The idea of an end to realise which an overt action is performed, and which may be called the *internal* side of conduct ; and (ii) the *overt act*, which is a *means to the end* and may be called the *external* side of conduct. Now, it is evident that to judge the moral worth of conduct, we must take into account only the first, i. e. the end ; for the second, i. e. the overt act, is an event taking place in a space and time, and thus, has, like other events of nature, no moral value, when taken by itself, i. e. apart from the end. This idea of an end which constitutes the internal side of conduct, or the whole mental attitude towards it is, as we have found, *intention* or the group of those *ideal* consequences to produce which the overt act is performed. ( See, pp. 66—70 of this Book ). Hence when we say that conduct or voluntary action is the real object of moral judgment what we really mean is that it is *intention* upon which the moral judgment is passed—it is intention that is morally imputable, that determines the moral value of an overt act : if the intention is good, the action is good ; if it is bad, the action is bad.

But intention is not an isolated state of our mind. It is related to character. Of course a particular

intention does not express the whole character of a man. A particular intention may be good, yet the character on the whole may be bad ; or it may be bad, yet the character, on the whole, good. As a system character is constituted by different stages or "universes of desires," and in every case intention expresses only a particular stage or "universe of desires." Thus the goodness of a particular intention indicates the goodness, and its badness the badness of character as exhibited through it at the time. Hence when we pass moral judgment upon intention, we really pass it on character as expressed through the intention. Thus *character, or rather the person having the character or doing an action is the ultimate object of moral judgment.*

**III. Review of Theories :** (a) Most of the writers of the idealistic school maintain that the real object of the moral judgment is *motive*, not intention, understanding by motive that part of intention which acts as *persuasives*. ( See p. 61 and pp. 66—68 of this Book ). "I think," says Prof. Mackenzie, "we must maintain that it is on the motive that the moral judgment is passed, or at least that the motive is properly taken into account in passing judgment." ( Manual of Ethics, p 135 ). Prof. Muirhead and Dr. D'Arcy write in the same strain : "we may say that an act is good because the motive is good." ( Elements of Ethics, p. 62 ). "Morality is a quality of action. The consequences of an act, then, influence its morality only in so far as they form the end which the agent consciously sets before him," i. e. the motive ). ( A Short Study of Ethics,

p 83 ). This view seems to me erroneous ; inasmuch as, in the first place, it takes motive in a sense that is erroneous, ( see p 66 of this Book ) ; and in the second place, it fails to account for the responsibility of the agent for those foreseen consequences which act as deterrents, or to which he is indifferent. Take the example as given by Prof. Mackenzie himself. "It may be objected, of course, that a man's motives are sometimes excellent, while yet we feel bound to condemn his actions. Some fanatics, for instance, have performed acts of the utmost atrocity 'thinking that they did God service'. Are we to approve these actions, it may be asked, because the end aimed at was good ?" In answering this question he holds that though the action itself as a thing done is not a desirable result, yet "in so far as they were aiming steadfastly at a definite end, and in so far as that end was a good one, we must approve of their actions. As a rule, indeed, we shall not entirely approve of them ; but the reason is that we do not regard their aims as perfectly good. This is implied in calling them fanatics. A fanatic is one who pursues some narrow end as if it were the supreme good. The motive of such a man is not the best possible, and the more conscientiously he is guided by that motive the more certainly will his actions not be the best possible". ( Manual of Ethics, pp. 136—37 ). The vacillation exhibited in this argument evidently shows the untenability of the view that the moral value of the motive determines the moral value of the action. In this case it is certain that the motive of the fanatics was



the best possible ; yet instead of regarding their actions as good, we disapprove of them to a certain extent. Why ? Prof. Mackenzie's answer is, we do so because their motive is narrow, or not perfectly good. But this is no answer at all. The thought of doing God service is certainly the best possible motive : but yet it is vitiated by its association with acts of the utmost atrocity. Infact, in the present case, the actions are judged, not by reference to the motive as understood by Prof. Mackenzie, but to the intention or the *ideal* consequences. Their actions are not entirely approved of because they are held responsible also for the consequences following upon their atrocious deeds ; and these consequences, being positively bad, detract from the perfectly good character of their primary end, viz. doing God service. This is the real reason why their motive is called narrow or not perfectly good ; and their intention taken as a whole being not entirely good, the actions determined by such an intention are not considered also entirely good. If they adopted good means also their intention as well as their actions would have been as good as possible.

Thus we find that merely the nature of a part of intention regarded as motive by this class of writers does not really determine the nature of action ; and this is manifest particularly in those instances where the badness of the other part of intention far outweighs its goodness. Moreover it is difficult to see why a man should be held responsible for those foreseen consequences which are included in his intention, but do not

form part of his motive. Thus, in the above instance, why should the fanatics be held accountable for the bad consequences of their atrocious deeds which, though intended by them, do not form part of their motive? Prof. Mackenzie admits in the last part of his argument that the badness of the consequences affect the moral value of both their motive and actions; but yet, according to his definition of motive, these bad ideal consequences should not be included in it. The truth is that it is impossible to deny that a man is responsible for the consequences which are foreseen and intended by him, it matters not whether they act as persuasives or dissuasives. *We, therefore, conclude that intention, not motive regarded as the persuasive part of intention, is the real object of moral judgment.*

(b) The intuitionists in general hold that the goodness or badness of an action is entirely and unconditionally determined by the goodness or badness of the motive which prompts us to the action, without any regard to the consequences. "What we judge is always the *inner spring* of an action, as distinguished from its outward operation. For, whatever else may be implied in its being a personal phenomenon, this at least is involved, that it is issued by the mind, and has its dynamic source there; and on that source it is, accordingly, that our verdict is pronounced." (Dr. Martineau. *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. II, p 24). Dr. Martineau being the greatest exponent of the above theory in recent times, we shall here consider his view only. He has prepared an elaborate list of the motives or what he

calls the "Springs of action". It is as follows :—

### **Lowest.**

1. Secondary Passions—Censoriousness, Vindictiveness, Suspiciousness.
2. Secondary Organic Propensions ;—Love of Ease and Sensual Pleasure.
3. Primary Organic Propensions ;—Appétites.
4. Primary Animal Propensions ;— Spontaneous Activity ( unselective ).
5. Love of Gain (reflective derivative from Appetite).
6. Secondary Affections ( sentimental indulgence of sympathetic feelings ).
7. Primary Passions ;—Antipathy, Fear, Resentment.
8. Causal Energy ; —Love of Power, or Ambition ; Love of Liberty.
9. Secondary Sentiments ;—Love of Culture.
10. Primary Sentiments of Wonder and Admiration.
11. Primary Affections Parental and Social ; — with ( approximately ) Generosity and Gratitude.
12. Primary Affection of Compassion.
13. Primary Sentiment of Reverence.

### **Highest.**

( Types of Ethical Theory, vol. II, p 265 ).

In this table the springs of action are arranged in order of merit ethically considered. If we examine this table we find what Dr. Martineau means by an inner spring of action upon which, as he holds, the moral judgment is passed. By an inner spring of action he sometimes means a feeling such as antipathy, fear,

resentment, affections, wonder, admiration, reverence, &c. ; sometimes a *want* or *impulse* such as the appetites ; and sometimes a *desire* such as the secondary propensions, passions, affections and sentiments. So that according to him the precise object of moral judgment is sometimes a feeling, sometimes a want or impulse and sometimes a *mere* desire. But, as we have found, a *mere* feeling, impulse or desire cannot be the motive or determinant of the moral i. e. voluntary action. ( See pp. 61—66 of this Book ).

The second defect of his theory consists in his omission to take into consideration the foreseen or intended consequences of an action in passing judgment upon it. So that all the adverse comments that we have passed upon the theory of the idealistic school should be passed upon it also. But to be fair to him we must admit that he has tried to reconcile his view with Bentham's by holding that the intended consequences also should be taken into account in estimating conduct. "Is there *no room*," writes he, "in morals for the computation of pleasurable and painful consequences at all ? Undoubtedly there is : in two ways. First, the computation is already more or less involved in the preference of this or that spring of action ; for in proportion as the springs of action are self-conscious, they contemplate their own effects, and judgment upon them is included in our judgment on the disposition. Secondly :.....the choice of *means* by which to carry out the workings of a spring of conduct can be made only by consideration of consequences. ....Thus, in the solution of all ethical problems, we

have successive recourse to two distinct rules : viz. the *Canon of Principles*, which gives the true *Moral Criterion* for determining the *right* of the case ; and then, the *Canon of Consequences*, which gives the *Rational Criterion* for determining its *wisdom*. 'The former suffices for the estimate of *character* ; but for the estimate of conduct, must be supplemented by the latter''. ( *Types of Ethical Theory*, pp. 275—76 ).

Here Dr. Martineau makes two assertions : (1) when the springs of action are self-conscious, i. e. *desires*, then, the consequences should be taken into account. But according to him, all springs of action are not self-conscious ; the primary springs of action are blind feelings and impulses which do not contemplate their own effects. So that at least in their case the consequences should not be taken into account. Thus his first assertion comes to this : when the prompting to action comes from desire, the intended consequences should be taken into account ; when it comes from other springs of action as feelings and impulses, they should not. (2) In estimating character the purity or impurity of the inner principles should be considered ; while in estimating conduct the nature of both the inner principles and the intended consequences must be taken into account. But the former gives the moral criterion and the latter the rational criterion. And as Ethics is concerned only with the morality of character and conduct, we are required to take into account only the moral criterion. Thus his second assertion comes practically to this : to estimate the morality of both character and conduct

there is really only one criterion : it is the moral criterion, i. e. the purity or impurity of the inner springs of action ; and the intended consequences have nothing to do with the morality of them. So that his attempt to rectify his one-sided view with regard to the object of moral judgment is a failure.

(c) The modern utilitarians, on the other hand, hold that unless an action is done *intentionally* it has no moral worth. "The action derives its moral quality not from the motive or character which it expresses, but from the effects which it produces. Those effects, indeed, do not entitle the act to be reckoned morally good or bad, unless it is one which the agent intends or wills to do ; but, given the intentional act, it is not on the motive which leads to its being intended, but on its effects in the way of pleasure or pain, that its morality depends." J. S. Mill is very emphatic on this point. "The motive has nothing to do with the morality of the action, though much with the worth of the agent. He who saves a fellow creature from drowning does what is morally right, whether his motive be duty, or the hope of being paid for his trouble ; he who betrays the friend that trusts him is guilty of a crime, even if his object be to serve another friend to whom he is under greater obligations." ( *Utilitarianism*, p 26 ). But to meet the criticism of this theory by Mr. Davies that "surely the rightness or wrongness of saving a man from drowning does depend very much upon the motive with which it is done," Mill modifies his theory thus : "The morality of the action depends entirely upon the intention—that

is, upon what the agent *wills to do*. But the motive, that is the feeling which makes him will so to do, if it makes no difference in the act, makes none in the morality : though it makes a great difference in our moral estimation of the agent, especially if it indicates a good or a bad habitual *disposition*—a bent of character from which useful or from which hurtful actions are likely to arise.” (Ibid, p 27, note). Thus, according to him, the motive has something to do with the morality of the action ‘when it makes a difference in it ; but when it does not do so, difference in it does not make any difference in the morality of the act. This evidently shows that the motive has no *necessary* connection with the morality of the action, which is entirely determined by the nature of the intention. Now, the important thing that we are to consider here is what he means by motive and intention. Evidently, by *motive* he means *feeling* which makes a man will to do something ; and by *intention*, the *intended* consequences produced by, or following upon the action. But, as we have found, feeling cannot be the motive of a moral action ; and intended consequences include motive when rightly understood. We have also found that intention when understood as the real psychological antecedent to, and therefore the real motive of, moral action, includes the idea of all the intended consequences of such action. The real defects of Mill’s view lie in the fact that he supposes that the motive and the intended consequent are two distinct things ; so that they can be separated and considered apart from each other. This forced

separation between motive and intention lies at the basis of his curious theory that motive has nothing to do with the morality of action, as if an action were entirely distinct from its motive and therefore separable from it. Motive and overt action are two sides of the complex fact called conduct. The overt act, taken by itself, is a physical event and thus, like other physical events, has no moral value. It acquires such value when considered as the external expression of the motive. Motive and action are, thus, inseparable ; and neither of them has any ethical meaning, when considered apart from the other. Again, as we have found, motive is related to character. Therefore, character, motive, action and the intended consequent are interrelated and inseparable. This is evident if we consider the illustrations as given by Mill himself. In accordance with his doctrine the act of saving a fellow creature from drowning out of the sense of duty and the same act done from the hope of some reward are *equally* right ; because here though the motives are different, yet in both the cases the act produces or is followed by the same beneficial consequences : that is to say, in this case the difference in the motive does not make any difference in the act. This strange theory does, no doubt, do violence to the moral consciousness of mankind, inasmuch as it fails to account for the responsibility of a man for his actions. Indeed it is very difficult to see why a man should be held answerable for action whose morality is determined by other considerations than his motive and character. If the action is the expression of the motive and character, its mora-



lity must be determined by them ; if it is not, then, it is a fact which has no necessary connection with his nature and for which, therefore, he is not accountable. Mill's whole theory is based upon the erroneous supposition that we pass moral judgment, not upon the *person doing*, but upon the *thing done*, i. e. upon the action as a physical event occurring in time and space, and abstracted from its psychological conditions, viz. the motive and character.

Thus we arrive at the conclusion that the real object of moral judgment is *intention*, not motive understood either as a part of intention which acts as persuasives, i. e. which forms the direct object of desire or the primary end in view, or as a *mere* feeling, impulse, desire which prompts the will to action irrespective of its choice : nor intention understood as simply the external consequences of the action intended and foreseen by the agent, but not including the motive which prompts the will. But intention is organically related to character ; and character belongs to a person. So that *the ultimate object of moral judgment is person having a character which expresses itself in and through the intention*. Hence, when we want to estimate the moral worth of an action what we ought really to do is to take into account the intention as a whole, i. e. all the foreseen and intended consequences and to see whether these consequences are, on the whole, good or bad ; if they are, on the whole, good, the action must be pronounced good ; if, on the whole, bad, the action must be declared bad. Again, when we want to esti-

mate character *as a whole*, we should take into consideration, not a particular action, but all the actions and see whether they are, on the whole, good or bad. The goodness or badness of the actions as a whole determines the goodness or badness of the character ; and thus, the degree of the goodness or the badness of the former determines the degree of the goodness or badness of the latter.

Another important point remains to be considered. Is it necessary that an intention should be embodied in an overt act before the moral judgment is passed upon it ? Or may intention *itself* be the object of moral judgment ? Some writers are of opinion that every intention, that is not a mere passing state of mind, is an act of choice, a determination—"a fully-formed purpose, a determined effort to produce a result," and as such, is the object of moral judgment, it matters not if it fails to issue in an overt act. A good intention may fail to embody itself in an action on account of the intervention of unfavourable external circumstances, but still it is good. Similar also is the case with a bad intention. In short an intention may be good or bad quite independently of its issue in action. "The moment which completes the mental antecedents (i. e. the inner springs of action )," writes Dr. Martineau, "touches the character with a clearer purity or a fresh stain ; nor can any hindrance, by simply stopping execution, wipe out the light or shade : else would guilt return to innocence by being frustrated, and goodness go for nothing when it strives in vain,.....It is, a characteristic of the Christian

ethics, and finds its most solemn expression in the Sermon on the Mount, where the eye of lust and the heart of hate are called to account with the adulterer and the murderer." ( Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, p. 26 ). "It is not what man Does," says Browning, "which exalts him but what man Would Do." This, of course, does not imply that the action is morally indifferent. It has also a moral value inasmuch as it affects the well-being of others for good or ill. So that a man who forms an intention and acts accordingly, acts doubly well or ill as the case may be and is, therefore, better or worse than a man whose intention has not as yet issued in action.

This view seems to be erroneous. A *mere* intention, a mere resolution is morally indifferent inasmuch as it is a bare abstraction—only an aspect of the whole concrete fact called conduct. The intention as understood in the preceding quotations is merely a *tendency*, or *desire* to act in a particular way ; and has no moral significance apart from the action to which it leads. But the intention as understood in the sense we have described above ( see p. 66 of this Book ) is inseparable from the action and when divorced from the latter loses all its moral significance. There is a wide interval between a mere intention and an intention embodied in an action, like that existing between a seed and a full-grown tree. The one is a mere possibility and the other a living actuality. No doubt intention itself is an act of choice—a determination, but as such it is only a psychological fact and like any other psychological fact has no moral value,

when taken by itself. A psychological fact simply *is*, whereas a moral fact is what *should be*. This will be apparent if we ask how do we ascertain the moral value of a *mere* intention? The answer cannot be that it is done by reference to the action or the consequences produced by the action; nor can the answer be that it is done by reference to the character, because in the case of the character also the same question will be raised. Of course it may be said that we do so by reference to the nature of the end intended; but still the difficulty is not really obviated. An end intended is as far from the end realised, as a mere idea of a thing is from the thing itself. For these reasons I completely agree with Prof. Muirhead in holding that "we do indeed pass moral judgment upon resolutions, but they are only provisional. A man is not good because he makes good resolutions, nor bad because he makes bad ones. It is only when the resolution passes into conduct that it justly becomes the object of a moral judgment." (Elements of Ethics, p 50). But still it should be admitted that when an intention indicates a *habitual disposition*, then and then only it acquires a moral significance; because a habitual disposition is an acquisition through a series of voluntary activities and thus, has a moral value.

## Chapter VII.

### The Moral Faculty : Conscience & Prudence.

**I. Meaning of Faculty** :—In psychology, “from very ancient times it has been customary to divide our mental states into a small number of general groups conceived to be the outcome of separate *faculties* or *powers* of the mind. By a Faculty is meant the mind’s capability of undergoing a particular kind of activity ; thus, our sensations of colour are due to the Faculty of vision, and our recollections to the Faculty of memory. The ground for the division of the mental faculties lies in the special nature of the psychical activities. Scholastic philosophers taught that the faculties of the soul should be distinguished *per actus et objecta*, that is, according to the nature of each activity and the object towards which it is directed. The former principle, however, is the real causal ground for the distinction, the latter being valuable mainly as an indication or symptom which helps to exhibit more clearly diversities in the quality of the energy.” ( Maher, Psychology, pp. 26—27 ). Thus, the ancient psychologists, after dividing the mind into three general and primary faculties, viz. the active Faculty of Cognition and Volition, and the passive Faculty of Affection, supposed that every mental state or process is explicable by being

referred to a corresponding faculty. This sort of explanation of the mental phenomena by the "faculty-hypothesis" has been vigorously criticised in recent times by many leading psychologists on the ground that mind is an organic unity and cannot, therefore, be divided into distinct and independent faculties, and has, thus, fallen completely out of vogue. The modern psychology substitutes the term "*function*" for the term "faculty", regards the faculties as *particular classes* of functions of the mind, and insists on "the necessity of real explanation by definite conditions ; giving rise to definite results, according to a fixed order." ( See Prof. Stout, *Manual of Psychology*, Book I, Ch. III. .

II. **The Moral Faculty** :—The old way of conceiving the nature of mind had not affected psychology only ; it had affected Ethics also. From very ancient times a class of ethical writers had tried to explain the phenomena of Moral Consciousness by referring them to a unique and independent faculty called the *Moral Faculty*, meaning by it a peculiar power by virtue of which the mind is susceptible of the apprehension of right and wrong in voluntary actions, as well as of the universal validity of some principles called the *moral laws* ; including also a certain susceptibility for feelings or sentiments called the feelings of moral approbation and disapprobation. But, unlike the "faculty-hypothesis" in psychology, the "faculty-hypothesis" in Ethics has still been influencing considerably the ethical thought of modern times. We should, therefore, examine it carefully in its different forms.

## (A) The Intuitional View :

**(1) Moral Sense :—**The moral sense theory teaches that as we have a faculty of intellectual perception so we have a faculty of moral perception. By the former we directly perceive the physical qualities of objects ; by the latter the moral qualities of actions. But each of these faculties requires sensations and feelings : the intellectual perception requires the sensations and feelings excited by the physical objects ; the moral perception also requires some peculiar kind of sensations and feelings that are excited in our consciousness by actions. So that as intellectual perception is an interpretation of cognitive sensations, so the moral perception is the interpretation of the moral feelings or sentiments. For these reasons the Moral Faculty is called the *Moral Sense*. Most of the ancient representatives of this view compared the moral perception to the aesthetic rather than the intellectual, and identified the Good with the Beautiful. Plato and the Stoics were the first to propound such a view. In modern times, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Herbart, Ruskin and others preached a similar doctrine. Ruskin says : "Taste is not only a part and an index of morality ; it is the only morality. The first and last and closest trial question to any living creature is, "What do you like ?" Tell me what you like, and I will tell you what you are." ( *Sesame and Lilies*). The moral sense theory is particularly associated with the name of the first two writers. Thus, according

to Shaftesbury, "no sooner are actions viewed, no sooner the human affections and passions discerned ( and they are most of them discerned as soon as felt ), than straight an inward eye distinguishes and sees the fair and shapely, the amiable, the admirable, apart from the deformed, the foul, the odious, or the despicable." ( *The Moralists*, II, p. 415 ). •Hutcheson also writes in a similar manner : "Just as we have a sense of beauty in the forms of sensible objects," so we have a sense of morality in the contemplation of actions from which we derive "still nobler pleasures than those that the physical sensations give". With him the Moral Sense is that "which makes rational actions appear beautiful or deformed" ; and he frequently speaks of "the moral beauty or deformity" of actions. These expressions evidently show that he identifies the sense of beauty with the sense of morality ; and for these reasons the Moral Sense as described by them is called the *Aesthetic Sense*.

**(2) Conscience :—**(a) Finding that mere sense or feeling is not always a safe guide in estimating actions and that still less it has that authority which is demanded by the Moral Faculty, Bishop Butler, a follower of Shaftesbury, would prefer to call the Moral Sense *Conscience*. •Butler's view of conscience is far deeper than Shaftesbury's view of the Moral Sense, and is based upon a sounder psychological view of human nature. we find two antagonistic classes of tendencies or impulses working in it : one class is *egoistic*, i. e. has a constant tendency towards *Self-love* ; and the other is *altruistic*, i. e. tends constantly towards *Benevolence*.



Thus Self-love and Benevolence are the two primary but contending tendencies of human nature. But human nature is not a mere aggregate of unreconciled elements; it is an *organic whole*—a unity back of the variety of the contending impulses. This unity is effected by a principle of reflection that controls and guides them into their due path, and thus, is a principle of harmony and reconciliation. This controlling principle in human nature is called by Butler *Conscience*. Conscience is, thus, superior to even Self-love and Benevolence : its authority is absolute and its commands are categorical imperatives, i. e. absolutely binding upon us irrespective of our will and assent. Its deliverances are, therefore, "immediate judgments as to the morality of actions and affections"—"Thus that principle", writes Butler, "by which we survey, and either approve or disapprove our own heart, temper, and actions, is not only to be considered as what is in its turn to have some influence ; which may be said of every passion, of the lowest appetites : but likewise as being superior ; as from its very nature manifestly claiming superiority over all others ; in so much that you cannot form a notion of this faculty, conscience without taking in judgment, direction, superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is, of the faculty itself : and to preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength as it has power, had it power, as it has manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world." (*Sermons* II.). But Butler is not definite and clear as to whether this authoritative principle is Reason or a

special and unique faculty over and above Reason. ( See Dissertation II, on the Nature of Virtue ).

For these reasons his followers took to two divergent lines. Some conceived it to be Reason and others a special inexplicable faculty. Kant, Calderwood, &c. represent the former, and Dr. Martineau the latter, view.

(b) **Moral Reason** :—According to Kant, “conscience is *practical reason* which, in every case of law, holds before a man his duty for acquittal or condemnation.” “All moral conceptions have their seat and origin completely *a priori* in the reason, and that in the commonest reason just as truly as in that which is in the highest degree speculative.” For Ethics, “there is properly no other foundation than the critical examination of a pure practical reason”. ( Kant’s Theory of Ethics, Abbott’s Ed. pp. 28, 7 ). What Kant precisely means by the practical or moral reason is expounded in his *Critique of Practical Reason*. In his *Critique of Pure Reason* he tells us that our knowledge of the world as revealed to our senses is entirely due to the exercise of the faculty of Sense and the faculty of Understanding upon the sense-materials in conformity with some universal relations such as space, time, substance and attribute, cause and effect, reciprocity, &c. The exercise of the faculty of Reason, the highest faculty in us, gives us some ideas—the ideas of the Soul, God and the Universe ; but these are only *regulative*, not constitutive ideas ; i. e. they do not prove the existence of those three realities, but simply supply three ideal principles in accordance with which we should regulate the process

of synthesis of experience into knowledge and push the process as far as we can in order to reach the ultimate but unattainable unity. Hence in the intellectual sphere Reason fails us to reach the reality, and our knowledge is therefore, entirely confined to the sphere of phenomena. "It is in the region of practice (i. e. moral sphere) that we transcend the phenomenal, and attain the real. 'The Practical Reason' discovers truth; the 'Autonomy of the Will' carries us beyond the phenomenal into the cogitable or supersensible world. Here the Categorical Imperative or Moral Law, our own Personality, Freedom of Will and the Being of God, are all entirely discovered". Thus the Practical or Moral Reason being the true source of our knowledge of reality, its revelations are infallible. "There is no such thing", says Kant, "as an erring conscience." ( For further details see Book II. pp. 14 — 16 ).

Following Kant Calderwood holds : "Conscience is that power of mind by which moral law is discovered to each individual for the guidance of his conduct. It is the Reason as that discovers to us absolute moral truth—having the authority of sovereign moral law. It is an essential requisite for the direction of an intelligent free will agent, and affords the basis for moral obligation and responsibility in human life." Again : "Conscience, in discovering to us truth, having the authority of moral law, is seen to be a cognitive or intellectual power." "Conscience, in discovering to us moral law for the guidance of our actions, has authority over all other springs of activity within us. ....All the forces

of our nature are dependent upon intelligence for direction, while for performance of its special function, Intelligence is dependent on its possession of Moral Law. All other powers are thus subordinated to moral law. The power which discovers such law is necessarily excluded from this subordination. .... On the ground thus stated we must regard as insufficient the theory that conscience is either the acquiescence or the antagonism of the whole nature on the occasion of the play of some appetite or desire. 'This theory, hinted at by Plato, when he described Injustice as 'a rising up of a part of the soul against the whole soul' was advocated by Trendelenburg ...'. Hence, "conscience in discovering truth absolutely authoritative as moral law is vested with sovereign practical authority in mind. This appears from its nature, and is confirmed by comparison of the functions of the moral faculty, with those of all other powers and capacities in mind." (Handbook of Moral Philosophy, pp. 77—79).

Even although Kant and Calderwood frequently speak of conscience as the Moral Reason, it is not perfectly clear what they precisely mean by it. Is the Moral Reason the rational Self itself, or a special power of it distinct and separate from its other rational powers? The latter seems to be their real view. Kant clearly and emphatically distinguishes the Pure and the Practical Reason, and even separates them. In the intellectual sphere Reason gives us the ideas of the Soul, God and the Universe; but it cannot prove that they correspond to any objective realities; and when-

ever it tries to prove that, it lands us in insoluble contradictions. But in the moral sphere, the very same Reason conclusively proves the existence of realities corresponding to those ideas. This evidently shows that neither the Pure Reason nor the Practical is the whole rational self; nor are they two distinct but correlated functions, because in that case they could not be separated; but two distinct faculties or powers lying side by side as it were and performing two distinct and unrelated functions.

Dr. Calderwood seems to hold the same view. In a significant passage in the above quotations he holds, in disagreement with Plato and Trendelenburg who regard human nature as an organic whole constituted by a variety of elements such as reason, passions, appetites, desires, &c., that conscience is not the whole nature agreeing or disagreeing with a particular element in it such as an appetite or desire, but it is that power in human nature to which all other powers are subordinated;—it is not the whole nature controlling the parts, but a peculiar power that is “vested with sovereign authority in mind.” Hence we conclude that the Moral Reason as understood by Kant and Calderwood is not really the whole rational Self, but simply a shadow of it, having the semblance of Reason, but really a peculiar mysterious power of mind.

(c) Dr. Martineau is more explicit in holding conscience to be a unique and unanalysable faculty of the mind. It is that faculty in and through which God speaks and communicates Himself to us; the voice of

conscience is the voice of God. He emphatically distinguishes the moral from the rational ; man is moral, not because he is rational, but because he possesses a divine power or faculty called conscience. Thus conscience regarded as a unique and inexplicable faculty, not reason, is the real source and basis of morality. ( For further details with regard to his account of conscience, see Book II, pp 7—9 ).

(d) **Common Sense** :—The Scottish school as represented by Reid, Stewart and others do not recognise conscience as a distinct and separate faculty, but include it in a wider faculty or power of mind called by them *Common Sense* - a sense which is common to all people and race in all times and ages by virtue of which they know truths superior to those derived from experience. “There are propositions which are no sooner understood than they are believed.....there is no searching for evidence, no weighing of arguments ; the proposition is not deduced or inferred from another ; it has the light of truth in itself, and has no occasion to borrow it from another.” They are called “first principles, principles of common sense, common notions, self-evident truths”. Some of these are the “first principles in morals”. ( Reid’s *Intellectual Powers*, Essay vi, chaps 4 and 6 ). Thus, according to these writers *Common Sense* is the only source of our knowledge of the universal truths whether they belong to the intellectual, moral or religious sphere.

(e) **Faculty of Faith or Belief** :—Sir W. Hamilton, Mansel and their followers also recognise an

original faculty of intuition called by them the *Faculty of Faith or Belief* by means of which we *intuitively* know all the intellectual, moral and religious truths that are truly universal.

(f) **Eternal Nature of man** :—The Cambridge Platonists as Cudworth, Clarke and Price try to find the basis of morality in the universal inherent nature of man. Following Plato and the Stoics they hold that behind their casual appearances all things contain universal and immutable elements which constitute their essence or inherent nature. To this inherent nature are due certain differences and relations between things which are likewise universal and immutable. "The differences, relations and proportions of things, both material and moral, in which all unprejudiced minds thus naturally agree, are certain, unalterable and real in the things themselves". ( Samuel Clarke, *Natural Religion*, pp 44—45 ). "That from these different relations of different things there necessarily arises an agreement or disagreement of somethings with others, or a fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations, is likewise as plain as that there is such a thing as proportion in Geometry or Arithmetic, or uniformity or difformity in comparing together the respective figures of bodies". ( Ibid, p 29 ). Thus, according to Samuel Clarke, all moral laws are based upon the essential constitution of man. The differences and relations between Persons ( e. g. God and Man, Man and Fellow-man ) arising necessarily out of such nature, make different persons capable of having

peculiar *Fitness* and *Unfitness* of circumstances ; or “which is the same thing, there arises necessarily among them a suitability or unsuitableness of certain manners of Behaviour”. Hence his famous dictum that morality is based upon “the fitness of things” ; or it is “to live according to nature”.

But the ultimate nature of things is identical with the *reason* of things, because nature is a rational system ; and therefore the ultimate nature or constitution of things is also rational ;—it is the embodiment of reason. Thus man's moral nature is a rational nature—morality is rationality ; and the Moral Faculty is the *Universal Reason* of which all beings whether natural or human are mere embodiments.

Wollaston, a disciple of Clarke, has carried this doctrine to its extreme form. “Moral evil, according to Wollaston, is the practical denial of a true position, and moral good the affirmation of it. To steal is wrong because it is to deny that the thing stolen is what it is, the property of another. Every right action is the affirmation of a truth ; every wrong action is the denial of a truth”. Hence by these writers Ethics is identified with Logic, as by the Moral Sense school it is identified with Aesthetic.

The main defect of the above doctrine is that it confounds the laws of morality with the laws of nature. The natural laws are the general statements of how things behave in relation to one another,—they are the statements of what *is*, whereas the moral laws express what *ought to be*—how the things called human beings



*should* behave in relation to one another. Again, in the physical world all phenomena, whether good or evil, take place in perfect accordance with the laws of nature, whereas in the moral sphere only what is good is in agreement with the moral laws, and what is bad takes place in violation of them. Thus an action whether good or evil takes place according to the laws of nature, for example, laws of physiology, but only when it is good, it takes place in accordance with the moral laws. For these reasons *fitness* does not always constitute *rightness*. To be a moral criterion fitness should mean fitness for something, i. e. for a moral standard or ideal. And this moral standard or ideal cannot be discovered by observing the physical nature ; because in the physical nature we find what *is*, and when we turn to our moral nature we discover the presence of what *ought to be*. Hence the physical and the moral nature cannot be identified or reduced to a common nature.

### Criticism of Intuitional View :

( For the general criticism of the Intuitional View see Book. II, pp. 11—14 ; and for the criticism of Kant's theory see *ibid*, pp 16—20 ). Here we shall consider only two points,—(1) *the teachability of Conscience*, and (2) *the perplexity of Conscience*.

**(1) The teachability of Conscience :—**we have found above that the general tenor of the intuitional view, whatever may be its form, is that the Moral Faculty is a unique and independent faculty whose sole function is to reveal *intuitively* the truth of the moral

laws, or the moral worth of actions. Now, an important question suggests itself : Is the Moral Faculty all-perfect and fully-developed from the beginning, or inchoate and imperfect in the beginning, attaining perfection gradually in course of time by education and development ? Some of the intuitionists maintain that the Moral Faculty is all-perfect from the beginning and therefore incapable of any education and development. Kant observes : "There is no such thing as an erring conscience ;" "An erring conscience is a chimera". ( *Metaphysic of Ethics*, 3rd. ed, p 217 ). Dr. Calderwood is more emphatic in this respect. "Conscience is a faculty which from its very nature, cannot be educated. Education, either in the sense of instruction or of training, impossible. As well proper to teach the eye, how and what to see : and the ear, how and what to hear : as to teach reason how to perceive the self-evident, and what truths are of this nature. All these have been provided for in the human constitution." ( *Handbook of Moral Philosophy*, p 81 ). But he does not deny the necessity of moral training. "Moral training is something different from education of conscience. Two things need here to be distinguished : (a) Personal experience in the application of conscience. Since all knowledge begins in experience, though it does not all arise from experience, the application of moral law becomes known in personal experience, according as the forms of activity admit of it. But application of law presupposes the knowledge of it, and knowledge of moral law is not gathered from experience. (b) Personal attainment in the practical subordi-

nation of other powers to the authority of conscience. This is of the very essence of moral training, which is dependent upon the sovereign authority of conscience." ( *Ibid*, pp 81—82).

Other intuitionist writers, such as Reid, Stewart, Whewell, Dr. Martineau, &c., on the other hand, maintain the opposite view. ( Cf. Reid's *Active Powers*, III, iii. 8, H. p. 595 ; Stewart's *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, sec. 174, and Whewell's *Elements of Morality*, I. p. 236, sec. 364—366 ). Conscience, according to them, is not all-perfect and fully-developed from the beginning ; it admits of development and education.

We shall consider the former view first : If conscience is all-perfect and fully-developed from the beginning, if it does not, therefore, require any training and development, we have to admit the absurd fact that the whole human nature of which conscience is only a part, is likewise incapable of education and development—it is all-perfect from the beginning ; because it is inconceivable that an organic whole can develop without and independently of a corresponding development of a part. This supposition is, therefore, not only inconsistent with the testimony of modern psychology, but also compels us to believe that the conscience of a child is as developed and perfect as that of a mature man—the conscience of a sinner is exactly of the same nature, as that of a saint ; that all the moral truths are revealed to the child or the sinner as completely and unerringly as to the mature man or the saint, and that, therefore, the latter is not better than the former. But this goes

directly against the common verdict of mankind ; it is a fact admitted all round that a very few moral truths, perhaps only the vague distinction between the right and the wrong, are known to the child. As the intellectual truths are revealed to men gradually, so are the moral truths. The human Self is a developing principle and as it advances in its development truths, *implicit* and unknown before, become *explicit* and known. These incontestable facts conclusively prove the untenability of the intuitionist view that conscience is a fixed and all-perfect faculty.

Other intuitionists as Reid, Stewart, Whewell, Dr. Martineau, &c, admit, as we have found, the teachability of conscience ; but yet maintain, like the former, that it is a unique and unanalysable faculty quite distinct from and independent of other faculties of mind. This view is possible if by education is meant, not that which originates absolutely new powers and capacities that were not already in human nature in germinal form, but that which helps the unfoldment of powers that are engrained there. As the eyes or ears become more keen and sensible by constant exercise, and get atrophied for want of it, so conscience may be made more vigorous and sensible by suitable education for want of which it may degenerate and ultimately become blunt. Thus, though education and development are consistent with the nature of conscience, yet the conception of it as a unique and unanalysable faculty having no *organic* connection with other powers of the self and no identity with the Self itself, remains for ever inconsistent with the organic

unity which is demanded for the self. The whole theory is based upon the mechanical conception of the self, which is so emphatically condemned by the modern psychologists.

**(2) Perplexity of Conscience** :—The most serious difficulty involved in the conception of conscience as a unique and unanalysable faculty of intuition is that in the different races and ages, and even in the same race and age among different peoples, the so-called moral intuitions are found to be divergent ; and that the so-called moral laws are found to be in conflict with one another. "The diversity of moral judgments among men", says Dr. Calderwood, "is the main difficulty in vindicating an intuitional theory of conscience, and is the great leading objection of its opponent." (Handbook of Moral Philosophy, p. 83 ). In going to treat of this difficulty he has considered two points :—

(a) **The extent to which divergence exists** : With regard to this point he observes : "All nations admit a distinction between right and wrong in human conduct. There is a very general agreement as to the forms of rectitude such as truthfulness, justice, benevolence. There is no nation which is known so to trans-  
pose moral distinctions as to place these forms of moral excellence in the list of qualities morally wrong. Diversity of opinion on moral subjects is much more concerned with the determination of what is wrong, than with deciding what is right. Men excuse deceit, who do not condemn integrity ; they approve advantage taken of another, but they do not condemn honesty ; they ap-

plaud cruel vengeance, but they still admire benevolence. There is thus a want of consistency in the case of many of the judgments pronounced. Compare the law of theft in ancient Sparta ; in Caffreland, famous for cattle-lifting; and in the nations of modern civilization." ( Ibid, pp. 83—84 ).

(b) **The philosophical explanation of divergence among the moral judgments of men.**—With regard to this point he remarks : "Men differ not as to the principles, but as to their application in given circumstances. Epictetus explains it thus,—'The same general principles are common to all men..... Where, then, arises the dispute ? In adapting these principles to particular cases', I. 23. Contradictory moral judgments imply error somewhere ; that error is capable of being detected and exposed ; its detection and exposure imply possession of common, unvarying standard of morals. An adequate explanation of diversity of moral judgments is therefore possible. The key to diversities in personal judgments, will afford the key to national diversities." ( Ibid, p. 84 ). Now the essential question is : "If the first principles of morals are self-evident truths, of which a reasoned contradiction cannot be given, how can the rational nature of man accept and act upon a tacit contradiction, of them ?" He gives twofold answer, ethical and psychological.

**Ethical explanations :—**(i) There are impulses in our nature which prompt us to act in opposition to the dictates of conscience. Conscience suggests one line of action, and the impulses another, in most instances oppo-

site to it. Selfishness and Malice are instances in point. This explains the fact that though we know the right, yet we may do the wrong. "Hence it happens that the diversity of opinion on Morals is much more concerned with what is wrong, by way of excusing it, than with what is right, by way of condemning it."

(ii) "There is often great difficulty in deciding what is present duty when there is none as to what is right in all circumstances. It is the relation of the agent to circumstances, which originates question of casuistry, and not the decision as to what courses of conduct are right in themselves. All such diversity of opinion concerns the application of the standard, not the nature of the standard, and is therefore to be laid aside as irrelevant when the discussion is concerned with the standard of moral distinctions. Men may agree that Benevolence is morally right and yet may altogether differ as to the duty of helping a beggar. Diversity of opinion on this latter point, though it is connected with morals, is not concerned with the standard of morality." (Ibid, p. 85).

**Psychological explanations :—**(i) Dispositions influencing us in action usually bias our judgments. What we like to do, is often thought right. Our reasoning power is liable to error ; and the risk of accepting 'an erroneous reasoning as correct is greatly heightened, "when cherished dispositions favour the accepted conclusions. In this way, the rational nature is often content to place false generalizations in the room of self-evident truths." (ii) Prevailing opinions are often accepted without any independent inquiry. "Besides, if the prac-

tice sanctioned is in harmony with an evil disposition common to our nature, there is double inducement to adopt it. Authority and Inclination combine their forces. Where social custom establishes a practice, unreasoning acquiescence is easy." (iii) "The moral sentiments cluster around a false judgment as readily as around a true. .... If a man, whether correctly or incorrectly, only approve an action, he will experience self-approbation in doing it. If, whether accurately or not, he only disapprove of an action, he will experience a sense of shame, or even of remorse, in doing it. Of all the recognised laws of mind, this is the one to which most prominence is to be given, in accounting for the astonishing diversity of opinion, founded upon appeals to conscience. .... Moral sanctions may thus gather around even gross immorality. When this law of union between judgment and sentiment is recognised, it is clear that sentiments afford neither the basis of moral distinctions, nor any certain guidance as to such distinctions. Moral responsibility hangs upon the possession of rational nature."

Again, in deciding moral questions, a man may either seek a clear view of moral law, or he may accept a current rule of conduct without inquiring as to its rational validity. In the former case, he accepts self-evident truths, capable of vindication by every test. In the latter, he proceeds upon a rule the rational insufficiency of which may be proved at every step. If individual and national history give evidence that men often prefer the latter course to the former, there



is ample explanation, ethical, intellectual, and sentimental, and that explanation does not affect the reality of self-evident moral principles, or impinge upon their authority as moral laws." (Ibid, pp. 85, 86, 87 ).

Dr. Martineau also maintains that "notwithstanding the uniformity of their moral nature, men may remain far from unanimity in their apparent moral judgments." The reasons described by him are the following : Every man is not aware or has the complete experience of the whole scale of the inner springs of action. ( See, above, chap. III, b. ) ; only the ripest mind has a full survey of it ; and to have a full survey of it is to have the knowledge of all possible combinations of human experience. To most men only a part is familiar and that too, often, a very small part. Still, however small the range of our moral experience, did we possess the same part of the scale or did we have the same range of moral experience, our moral judgments would exactly be the same. "We should have a narrower, but a concurrent sense of right and wrong." But as, in fact, different men possess different parts of the scale of impulses "by the predilections of their nature or the cast of their nature or the cast of their experience," the criteria of right and wrong adopted by them are not the same. The effect of this inequality is obvious. All moral judgments are *preferential*, i. e. the results of the comparison of two or more impulses. But all the impulses are not always explicitly stated : some are advanced, others remain concealed and therefore unnoticed. "It is in this suppressed term, which may secretly differ in

the mind of different disputants, that the source of apparent divergency lies. Ask two persons the value of B ; if one measures it by A as a standard, and the other by C, their answers will not agree. Not that they contain any real contradiction and may not both be true, when fully unfolded ; but so long as the measure tacitly employed remains latent and is not even self-confessed, the relative nature of the decision is hid under the disguise of an absolute verdict ; one voice declares a given thing to be "right," another to be "wrong" ; meaning no more than in the first case that it is superior to one substitute,—in the second, that it is inferior to another. •Of no moral activity can the worth be determined without conceiving *what would else be there* ; and unless this conception be identical in the thoughts of two advocates, they deal with differing problems under semblance of the same name." ( Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, p. 62 ). For example, if, to judge the moral value of martyrdom, one man compares it with the "family affections and near claims" which it abandons ; and another, with the sacrifice of self at the bidding of a higher and wider pity and love ; the former would *condemn* and the latter *admire* it. "Thus the facts that a part only of the moral scale is present to particular persons, and to different persons not the same part, readily explain the divergencies of ethical judgment, without compromising in the least the uniformity of moral conception throughout the human race." ( Ibid, p. 63 ).

Even admitting the reasonableness of the above

explanation in so far as the divergency of moral judgments is concerned, it cannot be admitted that such explanation really resolves the difficulties arising out of the "conflict of duties" or moral principles themselves. The real difficulty connected with the conception of a unique and unanalysable moral faculty does not arise from the divergency of moral judgments, but from the conflict of duties or moral principles that are held to be intuitively and unerringly perceived by such faculty. Dr. Calderwood observes that all peoples, races and ages recognise the ultimate distinction between right and wrong in human conduct and entertain a very general agreement as to what is right in a special case ; but they differ considerably with regard to what is wrong. But a duty or moral principle is not only concerned with what is right but also with what is wrong ; because what is right necessarily implies what is wrong. Thus, "honesty is good" is a moral law ; so also is "dishonesty is bad". If "honesty" is declared right or good, "dishonesty" also is declared wrong or bad at the same breath. Honesty and dishonesty are correlative terms ; and therefore the moral worth of one necessarily implies the moral worth of another. Consequently if people differ with regard to what is wrong, it is practically admitted that there is a conflict of duties or principles—an admission which goes directly against the conception of conscience as a unique and unanalysable faculty.

Dr Martineau is uncompromising. He denies the conflict among at least the fundamental moral principles,

and any exception to their universal application. We shall, therefore, consider two points :—i) whether there is any real conflict among the moral principles ; (ii) whether there is any real exception to their universal application.

(i) **Conflict of Moral Principles** :—That there is a real conflict among the moral principles is admitted by many eminent moralists. If we examine the nature of the so-called moral principles we find that a conflict really exists among them. Take some familiar instances. “Thou shalt not lie”, “Thou shalt commit no murder”, “Thou shalt not steal”, “Thou shalt do no injury to a fellow-man”, are all familiar instances of the moral principles. But if we examine them we find them to conflict with one another. Examine the first and the second commandments : suppose that an assassin comes to you for informations about the whereabouts of a man ; are you morally bound to speak the truth ? Here you are in a fix. If you speak the truth by giving the informations, you practically help him in killing the man, and thus violate the second commandment : if you tell a lie, you violate the first. Examine the first and the third : Suppose that you know that a certain person has concealed some treasure in a particular place, and that a robber comes to you for necessary information : are you morally bound to speak the truth ? Here you are in another fix. If you speak the truth you help him in stealing the treasure, thus violating the third commandment ; and if you tell a lie, you violate the first. In this way we can show that all the commandments stated

above do actually come into conflict with one another. Now, having regard to the fact that truths cannot be inconsistent with one another inasmuch as in that case we cannot accept both of them as true, these conflicting moral principles cannot be considered as the ultimate and self-evident truths. Not to speak of those who are avowedly not intuitionists, even Dr. Martineau has been compelled to admit that the moral principle "Thou shalt not lie" comes, in some instances, into conflict with Benevolence or "Thou shalt do no injury to your fellow being" and the principle of rational self-love. "If veracity is put under the protection of the *highest* spring of action, it would seem to be *unconditionally* obligatory.... Are we then precluded from even considering such pleas of exception as moralists have held to justify the practice of deception in extreme cases, when nothing else can save life, or its best contents, for ourselves or for our friends? Must the enemy, the murderer, the madman, be enabled to wreak his will upon his victim by our agency in putting him on the right track?" In reply to such a question he observes: "Such persons, we surely may say, can no more claim the benefit of the "common understanding" ( i. e. veracity ), than could a spy who, by stealing the password eludes the sentry's vigilance and makes his notes of the disposition of the lines, expect to be treated as a comrade, if he be found out". Thus, according to him, we are justified in telling lies to assassins, robbers, enemies with arms in their hands, madmen, &c. when they want to injure us or other men by availing themselves of the benefit of vera-

city. Hence the principle "Thou shalt not lie" is not universally binding upon us under all circumstances. And the limit within which it must work, or beyond which it should not pass can be discovered by utilitarian considerations, not by the intuition of conscience. ( For the classical proof that there are "no innate practical principles", see Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book, I. ch. II ; and also Dr. Paulsen's *System of Ethics*, pp. 672—81 ).

(ii) The so-called moral principles are not only reciprocally conflicting, but also found to be conceived of differently in different ages and races with regard to their exact meaning, scope and authority. After carefully sifting the testimonies recorded by travellers about the manners and customs of the savages, and comparing them with those of the civilized people, Prof. Paul Janet, one of the foremost intuitionists, has arrived at the following conclusions :—"There is no savage tribe in which we do not find the germs of morality ; in proportion as peoples rise to the same plane of civilization, they form moral ideas which resemble each other more and more closely, whatever may be their differences of race, climate, and habits. .... Moral contradictions depend upon the degree of ignorance or of intelligence to which a people has arisen. In proportion as they grow wiser, they tend more and more toward one and the same conception of morals, which is the very thing that we call civilization ; and the chief object of all intelligent moral science is to extend the knowledge and improve the comprehension of those moral laws, *which, if not truly*

*universal in the past*, are to become so in the future. Thus we have seen the prejudices, and vices which belong more or less to the state of barbarism, gradually disappearing. Thus, for example, as the feeling of respect for human life has developed more and more among mankind, under the double influence of philosophy and of religion, we have seen every thing which is opposed to this principle disappear or grow weaker. Thus cannibalism, the vendetta, private wars, human sacrifices, tyrannicide, suicide, duelling, and the use of torture, after being for a long time allowable and even honourable practices, have gradually disappeared from manners and from opinions. Thus, as the true idea of the family has been disseminated, we have seen the disappearance, or the limitation to certain countries, of polygamy, of a father's right of life and death over his children, of the right of primogeniture, &c. In regard to property, as society has become more settled, we have seen pillage and brigandage, which at first were the privilege of heroes, become the refuge of malefactors : we have seen the right of property become more and more accessible to all, and better and better guaranteed. In regard to personal liberty, we have seen violence and cruelty pass away so far as exercised in the name of religious faith. In regard to international rights, we have seen the rights of war gradually reduced to what is strictly necessary : we have successively abandoned or condemned pillage, the massacre of the conquered, the reduction of prisoners to slavery, odious means of warfare, such as poison ; and in time of peace, a hatred of strangers, the right of *aubaine*,

and all similar relics of a state of barbarism. In a word, as the appreciation of the dignity of man and of human brotherhood has become more and more general, men have come to understand better the results of these principles, and will continue to grow in the comprehension of them. Thus the progress of human consciousness will gradually bring about the disappearance of those contradictions so often encountered by moralists."

"But can the progressive development of moral ideas be reconciled with the doctrine of an immutable and absolute moral law? Is that which is absolute, susceptible of change? This apparent difficulty is removed by a very simple distinction—*that between truth in itself and the knowledge of truth which we possess*". All truths, whether scientific, moral or religious, are immutable and absolute; but our knowledge of them is never complete from the beginning; progresses from the rudimentary stage to the fully-developed in course of time. And he adds: "There are moral, as well as physical, laws: there are moral, as well as geometric, truths. In themselves these truths and these laws are absolute, immutable, and universal; but they do not appear to us at first in their entirety, nor always in their true colors. We make false or incomplete hypotheses in morals, just as we do in physics. Finally, error does not prove the non-existence of truth. Moral science is derived from an increasing knowledge of human nature. It has two sources—human nature and brotherhood. In proportion as mankind understand more fully the value of human personality and the



identity of nature in all men, moral science will be extended and developed. ... .. Moral progress is not, then, incompatible with the intrinsic immutability of moral truths. On the contrary, it may be said, that, but for the hypothesis of an absolute moral law within our consciences, this progress itself would be inexplicable ; for change is not necessarily progress. If there were not something essentially good and true, I cannot see why one state of society should be better than another, respect for human life better than savage cruelty, human equality better than slavery, or religious toleration better than the bloodthirsty faith of the old prehistoric superstitions." • ( Theory of Morals, pp. 348—51 ).

Thus Prof. Janet admits that our knowledge of the moral laws is not perfect from the beginning ; it grows and develops in course of times and ages, and in this way only we come to know their meaning and scope better and better. This admission is sufficient to subvert the rigoristic view of conscience that it is all-perfect and fully-developed from the beginning.

(B) **Hedonistic view** :—The hedonists in general deny the need for a Moral Faculty as an innate power for recognising moral distinctions. The moral distinctions, they say, are not based on anything *inherent* in the actions, but on the nature of their *external* consequences. If these consequences are, on the whole, pleasurable, the actions are right ; and if painful, the actions are wrong. Thus the measure of the moral worth of an action being entirely dependant on the

nature of the external consequences, it requires a *faculty of calculation* rather than a faculty of intuition. Hence the tendency of hedonism is to identify conscience with *Prudence*, meaning by the latter an organisation of impulses and desires in such a wise as to secure the greatest sum-total of pleasure, and the least sum-total of pain in ourselves (Egoism) and also in others (Utilitarianism). Of course they, still, talk of conscience ; but they do so in a different sense : with them conscience is a compound and derivative faculty : it is developed from sensations variously associated. “Generally, under this theory, conscience is represented as a form of Feeling, involving reverence for moral distinctions, and impelling to their observance. Sometimes conscience has been regarded rather as a restraining force, involving a pain more or less intense, attendant on violation of duty.” For these reasons, conscience is commonly named by the Utilitarians “the Moral Sense”, of course using the phrase in a sense quite different from that in which it was used by Shaftesbury and Hutcheson.

Mill remarks : “The internal sanction of duty, whatever our standard of duty may be, is one and the same—a feeling in our own mind ; a pain, more or less intense, attendant on violation of duty, which in properly cultivated moral natures rises in the more serious cases, into shrinking from it as an impossibility. This feeling, when disinterested, and connecting itself with the pure idea of duty, and not with some particular form of it, or with any of the merely accessory circumstances, is

the essence of Conscience ; though in that complex phenomenon as it actually exists, the simple fact is in general all encrusted over with collateral association, derived from sympathy, from love, and still more from fear ; from all the forms of religious feelings ; from the recollections of childhood and of all our past life ; from self-esteem, desire of the esteem of others, and occasionally even self-abasement. This extreme complication is, I apprehend, the origin of the sort of mystical character which, by tendency of the human mind of which there are many other examples, is apt to be attributed to the idea of moral obligation, and which leads people to believe that the idea cannot possibly attach itself to any other objects than those which, by a supposed mysterious law, are found in our present experience to excite it. Its binding force, however, consists in the existence of a mass of feeling which must be broken through in order to do what violates our standard of right, and which, if we do nevertheless violate that standard, will probably have to be encountered afterwards in the form of remorse. Whatever theory we have of the nature or origin of conscience, this is what essentially constitutes it." ( Utilitarianism, pp. 41—42 ).

With regard to the innateness of conscience Mill observes : "If, as is my own belief, the moral feelings are not innate, but acquired, they are not for that reason the less natural. It is natural to man to speak, to reason, to build cities, to cultivate the ground, though these are acquired faculties. The moral feelings are not indeed a

part of our nature, in the sense of being in any perceptible degree present in all of us ; but this, unhappily, is a fact admitted by those who believe the most strenuously in their transcendental origin. Like other acquired capacities above referred to the moral faculty, if not a part of our nature, is a natural outgrowth from it ; capable, like them, in a certain small degree, of springing up spontaneously ; and susceptible of being brought by cultivation to a high degree of development. Unhappily it is also susceptible, by a sufficient use of the external sanctions and of the force of early impressions, of being cultivated in almost any direction : so that there is hardly anything so absurd or so mischievous that it may not, by means of these influences, be made to act on the human mind with all the authority of conscience." ( Ibid, p. 45 ).

Dr. Bain writes thus with regard to the origin and character of conscience : "I entirely dissent from Dugald Stewart and the great majority of writers on the Theory of Morals, who represent Conscience as a primitive and independent faculty of the mind, which would be developed in us although we never had any experience of external authority. On the contrary, I maintain that Conscience is an imitation within ourselves of the government without us ; and even when differing in what it prescribes from the current morality, the mode of its action is still parallel to the archetype. ... The proof of this affirmation is to be met with, in observing the growth of conscience from childhood upwards, and also in examining closely its character

and working generally. ... The first lesson that a child learns as a moral agent is obedience. ... The child's susceptibility to pleasure and pain is made use of to bring about this obedience, and a mental association is rapidly formed between disobedience and apprehended pain, more or less magnified by fear. ... The feeling of encountering certain pain, made up of both physical and moral elements—that is to say, of bodily suffering and displeasure—is the first motive power of an ethical kind that can be traced in the mental system of childhood. ... A sentiment of love or respect, toward the person of the superior, infuses a different species of dread ... the dread of giving pain to a beloved object. Sometimes this is a more powerful deterring impulse than the other. We call it a higher order of conscience to act from love than to act from fear. When the young mind is able to take notice of the use and meaning of the prohibitions imposed upon it, and to approve of the end intended by them, a new motive is added, and the conscience is then a triple compound, and begirts the actions in question with a threefold fear ; the last ingredient being paramount, in the maturity of the sympathies and the reason." ( *Emotions and Will*, Ch. XV, §§ 21—22 ).

Herbert Spencer, on the other hand, has tried to reconcile the intuitional and hedonistic views by his doctrine of heridity. He agrees with the hedonists in that conscience was a derivative faculty to our remote forefathers ;—it was derived from the organized and consolidated experiences of the race ; but the net results

of these experiences being transmitted to us in accordance with the law of heridity, it has now become in us an innate primitive faculty of moral intuitions. "To make my position fully understood," observes Spencer, "it seems needful to add that, corresponding to the fundamental propositions of a developed Moral Science, there have been and still are, developing in the race, certain fundamental moral intuitions ; and that, though these moral intuitions are the results of accumulated experiences of Utility, gradually organized and inherited they have come to be quite independent of conscious experience. Just in the same way that I believe the intuition of space, possessed by any living individual, to have arisen from organized and consolidated experiences of all antedecedent individuals who bequeathed to him their slowly-developed nervous organizations—just as I believe that this intuition, requiring only to be made definite and complete by personal experiences, has practically become a form of thought, apparently quite independent of experience ; so do I believe that the experiences of utility organized and consolidated through all past generations of the human race, have been producing corresponding nervous modifications, which, by continued transmission and accumulation, have become in us certain faculties of moral intuition—certain emotions responding to right and wrong conduct, which have no apparent basis in the individual experiences of utility. I also hold that just as the space intuition responds to the exact demonstrations of Geometry, and has its rough conclusions interpreted and verified by

them ; so will moral intuition respond to the demonstrations of Moral Science, and will have their rough conclusions interpreted and verified by them. To this ... .., I will add only that the evolution-hypothesis thus enables us to reconcile opposed moral theories, as it enables us to reconcile opposed theories of knowledge. For as the doctrine of innate forms of intellectual intuition falls into harmony with the experiential doctrine, when we recognize the production of intellectual faculties by inheritance of effects wrought by experience ; so the doctrine of innate powers of moral perception becomes congruous with the utilitarian doctrine, when it is seen that preferences and aversions are rendered organic by inheritance of the effects of pleasurable and painful experiences in progenitors." ( *Principles of Ethics*, pp. 123—24 ). ( For his account of the origin of moral consciousness or conscience, see Book II, Ch. V. 3—ii ).

**Criticism of Hedonistic View :—**(a) Hedonism identifies conscience with *Prudence* ; but they are evidently two distinct faculties. Prudence is the faculty of *intellectual* calculation ; whereas conscience is the faculty of *moral* intuition ; the one calculates the utility of action, while the other discerns the moral value of it. Hence by identifying the one with the other it identifies utility with morality, correct calculation with right-doing, and incorrect calculation with wrong-doing. Thus, if I do an act thinking that it will lead to good or bad consequences, my action will be good or bad in the former case, and bad or good in the

latter according as my calculation will prove correct or incorrect : and hence the rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness of actions will depend entirely upon the correct or incorrect calculation of their consequences. If we accept such an account of the morality of action, then our success or failure in solving a problem of mathematics or science should also be considered as *morally* right or wrong. But this is evidently absurd. Hence, without abolishing the distinction between utility and morality, "is" and "ought-to-be", intellectual calculation and moral valuation, we cannot identify conscience with Prudence.

In the second place, calculation of consequences presupposes previous knowledge of them ; so that Prudence as a faculty of calculation can operate only when we already have such knowledge in possession. It is therefore evident that Prudence not being operative during the time we gather such knowledge, we have no consciousness of right and wrong. This is contradicted by facts. The consciousness of right and wrong exhibits itself very early in life ; even the children are found to display instinctive preferences and aversions.

In the third place, Prudence fails to account for the nature of moral *authority* and the bitter feeling of *remorse*. The law of Prudence, as Kant holds, is *hypothetical*, inasmuch as its binding force depends upon the condition that we want the attainment of some end ; and continues so long as we continue to want it ; but ceases altogether with the cessation of such a want. Thus, so long as we want happiness individual or social, we



must abide by the law of Prudence ; but the moment we cease to want it, the law altogether ceases to bind us. The law of conscience is of quite different character. It is absolutely and unconditionally binding upon us—it is a *categorical imperative*. Hence the *authority* of Prudence is *hypothetical*, whereas the authority of conscience is *categorical*. ( See Bl. II, p. 16 ).

Again, if wrong-doing is incorrect calculation, then the feeling of shame consequent upon miscalculation in the moral sphere is no more nor less than that consequent on miscalculation elsewhere, viz. in the intellectual sphere. Why should we be more shameful when we commit a wrong than when we make a mistake, for instance, in working out a problem of mathematics or science ? On the purely hedonistic principles, therefore, any real distinction between “remorse” and “regret”—the feeling of shame consequent on wrong-doing and the feeling of regret consequent on the making of an intellectual error—cannot, by any means, be maintained.

(*b*) No doubt, Mill speaks of conscience as something distinguished from Prudence ; but conscience, according to him, is nothing but a feeling—“a pain, more or less intense, attendant on violation of duty” ; but actually it is a complex phenomenon—the feeling “encrusted over with collateral associations”. Conscience is, therefore, like all other feelings, blind ; it has no vision of the future—it cannot calculate beforehand the consequences of actions and cannot, therefore determine what our duty should be in a particular instance. This last function is ascribed to Prudence. Prudence is,

thus, still the faculty of moral valuation, whereas conscience is only a feeling attendant on the violation of duty, i. e., the feeling of *remorse*.

Again, with Mill conscience is an acquired, not an innate, faculty ; but yet it is natural : though not a part of our nature in the sense of being present in all of us in any perceptible degree, yet it is a natural outgrowth like the faculties of speaking, reasoning, &c., and capable of springing up, to a certain degree, *spontaneously*. All these evidently show that though conscience does not exist in us in the all-perfect and fully-developed form from the beginning, as some intuitionists suppose it to do so, it still exists in all of us at least in a germinal form, and is, therefore, inherent in our nature. This admission is equivalent to the saying that the true conscience is not the feeling of remorse, but the sense of duty together with the feeling that attends on its violation—it is the faculty of *moral intuition and emotion*. Thus his idea of conscience taken as a whole, is inconsistent with his view that Prudence is the true faculty of moral valuation. Prof. Grote has truly remarked : “The very interesting description of conscience which Mr. Mill gives in p. 41 ( of *Utilitarianism* ), when he calls it ‘a pain attendant on violation of duty’ and describes its binding force as consisting in ‘the existence of a mass of feeling opposing itself to the action,’ seems to me, if anything is, intuitivist. Action is certainly not due in that case to the consideration of general happiness alone.” ( *Examination of the Utilitarian Philosophy*, p. 168 ).

(c) Dr. Bain's inductive theory of conscience is quite wide of the mark. He supposes that the *moral* faculty develops from *non-moral* elements. Mill also seems to countenance this view in some passages of his *Utilitarianism*. According to both, "conscience is the result of education, which, by association and other means, works and transforms the external sanctions into an inward habit ; and that the internal sanction ( i. e. conscience ) is thus purely secondary and artificial." Besides all the difficulties that are found to be involved in such a theory as this ( see Book II, Ch. IV, critical estimate of Utilitarianism, ii ), it ignores the fact that at a very early age, when any artificial production of conscience is impossible, children distinguish as to rightness or wrongness in the commands issued ; there are some injunctions which they resent as unjust : Again, it describes two stages of conscience, earlier and later ; in the former, conscience is a compound of *emotions* constituted by hope of reward, fear of punishment, love, &c. ; whereas in the later, it is an *intelligent* forecast of the effects of actions, i. e. Prudence. But the earlier form of conscience is not the same as the moral sentiment inasmuch as children resent some commands as unjust ; and the later form of it being mere prudence involves all the difficulties that are found to arise out of its identification with conscience as a faculty of moral intuition.

(d) H. Spencer's attempt to reconcile the inductive and the intuitive theory of conscience is equally futile. It involves all the difficulties that are found to be involved in both of them. Moreover, the very doctrine of

heridity by means of which he seeks to make the transition from the former to the latter possible is questioned by the most leading biologists such as Weismann and his followers, according to whom the acquired dispositions due to accumulated and consolidated experience of the race are not transmitted to the offsprings ; what are really transmitted are the spontaneous variations that take place in the *Germ-plasm*. Hence, according to the latter theory, conscience or the consciousness of the moral truths that is supposed by Spencer to be acquired simply through accumulated and consolidated experience by our remote ancestors and inherited by us as their descendants, cannot really be transmitted to and inherited by, us ; and if we have at all inherited any capacity for moral intuition from them, it must have been *inherent* in their nature as moral beings, not simply derived from their experience. Thus, the doctrine of heridity as developed by Weismann points rather to the intuitive ( in a modified sense ) character of conscience than the inductive.

(c) **Eudaemonistic view** :—We have found above that both the inductive and the intuitive views of conscience are imperfect and futile attempts to interpret its true nature. The tenor of intuitionism is to regard conscience as a mysterious and inexplicable faculty having no organic relation to the self ; and that of hedonism is to make it wholly a mechanical and accidental product of development from *non-moral* elements. Eudaemonism tries to reconcile these two antagonistic views by accepting what is true and

rejecting what is false, in them and thereby showing that they represent two sides or aspects of the true conscience. The true conscience, according to this theory, is *Reason* as understood, not in that half-hearted way as Kant and his followers did, but in a much deeper way. "Conscience" says Prof. Muirhead, "is only another side of consciousness. It is in the field of practice what consciousness is in the field of knowledge. This fundamental identity is already indicated in the words themselves. Consciousness ( *conscire* ) is the sense we have of ourselves, as realised in the mode of activity we call knowledge ; conscience ( also *conscire* ) is the sense we have of ourselves as realised in conduct." ( *Elements of Ethics*, pp. 238—39 ). Thus, as consciousness is the self which constructs the systematised world of knowledge or experience out of the chaotic mass of sensations, so conscience is the self which constructs the systematised world of morality out of the chaotic mass of social relations and institutions which are nothing but "physical facts without moral meaning" when taken by themselves. But the self constructs both the world in accordance with principles *inherent* in its nature. Thus, the self is the source of the principles of both knowledge and conduct. Like consciousness, conscience also develops in course of time ; and this development is effected by the gradual application of higher and higher principles called categories and ideas ( Kant ) or thought-determinations ( Hegel ) in the case of knowledge ; and moral laws in the case of conduct. But these principles, in neither case, are explicit, but are *implicit*, in the

beginning ; and we come to be conscious of them, and consciously apply them, only when the self becomes sufficiently developed. But these principles of construction are not derived from experience intellectual or moral ;—they are *inherent* in human nature as the maker of such constructions. Thus, eudaemonism agrees with intuitionism in holding that the germs of morality are *inherent* in human nature ; that the moral principles are not, therefore, derived from experience, but are the necessary conditions of the interpretation and organisation of such experience : it also agrees with hedonism in holding that conscience is not a mysterious and inexplicable faculty all-perfect and fully-developed from the beginning ; that, therefore, the moral truths are not revealed to us all at once at least in their full scope and meaning ; that education is indispensably necessary for the unfoldment of its contents, and that, thus, only in the course of years and ages, the moral truths gradually come out to us in their true colours.

That the rational self is the ultimate source of all moral truths and principles may be shown if we examine the relation between the theoretical and practical judgments, i. e. the judgments of facts and the judgments of value. I cannot do better than quote what Prof. Dewey has said in this connection : “Indeed, just as every judgment about existent fact naturally takes the form ‘S is P’, so every judgment regarding an activity which executes an idea takes the form, ‘S ought ( or ought not ) to be P’. ..... It is the very essence of theoretical judgment—judgment regarding fact—to state truth—what is.

And it is the very essence of practical judgment—judgment regarding deeds—to state that active relation which we call obligation, what *ought to be*. The judgment as to what a practical situation *is*, is an untrue or abstract judgment. The practical situation is itself an *activity*; the needs, powers and circumstances which make it are moving on. At no instant in time is the scene quiescent. But the agent, in order to determine his course of action in view of the situation, has to *fix* it: he has to arrest its onward movement in order to tell what it is. So his abstracting intellect cuts a cross-section through its on-going, and says, ‘This is the situation’. Now the judgment, ‘This ought to be the situation’, or ‘In view of the situation, my conduct ought to be thus and so’, is simply restoring the movement which the mind has temporarily put out of sight. By means of its cross-section, intelligence has detected the principle, or law of movement of the situation; and it is on the basis of this movement that conscience declares what ought to be.” Hence we find that there is no need of any “special mental faculty which may declare what ought to be. The intelligence that is capable of declaring truth, or what is, is capable also of making known obligation; for obligation is only *practical* truth—the *is* of doing.” ( *Outlines of Ethics*, pp. 192—194 ).

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## BOOK II.

### Chapter I.

#### The subject or standard of Moral Judgment.

We have found that the moral judgment can be expressed either as that a conduct is right or wrong, or as that it is good or bad. But "right" refers to a rule or law, and "good" to an end. Thus the moral judgment has two forms,—it is either in accordance with a *law*; or it is in accordance with the conception of a *good*. These two fundamental forms of the moral judgment refer apparently to two different standards, viz. *the standard of a law*, and *the standard of an end*. Though the latter is prior in importance, being that on which the former rests, the former is prior in time. Whether we look at the moral history of the individual, or of the nation, we find that morality comes to us first in the form of a law imposing conduct upon us from outside. Thus in the earliest part of our life we feel ourselves in the presence of rules or laws which are nothing but commandments from parents, teachers, guardians, priests and kings. All religious customs are merely commandments which guide and control our conduct, to a large extent, irrespective of our will and assent. The same is true of nations. The first idea of morality is of obedience to law. Even at the present day, among the majority of the civilised people, the prevalent idea of morality is that it consists in



acting in accordance with a law laid down by a Superior Will. So that we shall consider these two fundamental forms of the moral standard in order of their priority in time.

**I. The standard of a law :—(1) The Law as wholly external :** We have found above that the moral standard comes to us first in the form of *an external law*, or commandment. The defects of such conception of the moral standard are mainly threefold :—

(a) In the first place, these commandments or rules whether written or unwritten, are of various kinds and of unequal importance. The ceremonial, political and truly moral injunctions are mixed up with one another and regarded as of equal importance.

(b) Even the strictly moral injunctions are found, on examination, to be mutually conflicting. Thus, in some instances, the commandment, “Thou shalt not steal” comes into conflict with “Thou shalt do no murder”. For example, a person knows that another person has concealed a sharp weapon to kill a third. But he knows also that if he steals the weapon he can save the life of the third. Now, if he steals it, he will violate the first, and if he does not, he will violate the second commandment ; because by refraining from stealing it, he will not prevent the second person from killing the third thus abetting, in a sense, his murder. Moreover, all moral injunctions are hard and fast rules, purely abstract in nature, so that they cannot explain satisfactorily all human conducts under all changing circumstances. The clear evidence of the truth of this fact is the necessity

felt for constructing such a system of explanations as casuistry in the Christendom, and the Mimāṅsā philosophy of Jaimini in India, whose sole aim is to fit in the moral and religious injunctions as embodied in scriptures and other sacred books with the changing circumstances of the people.

(c) Finally, the very nature of morality is inconsistent with the nature of such an external standard. Morality implies that the actions to be moral must be *our actions*, that is to say, the actions should be determined, not by a law which is merely “given”, but by a law of *our own* nature—a law which is absolutely *internal*—a law of our whole self. • A slavish submission to a superior will on the ground of its superior power is rather that which is quite opposite to the conception of morality. Hence the necessity of a transition to—

## 2. The law as Internal :

(A) The above difficulties arising out of the conception of the moral law as wholly external can be removed by conceiving it as internal. It is true that sometimes moral actions are determined by laws apparently external ; but this is so only, because they are merely external expressions of an internal law ; and though these external laws or commandments may sometimes conflict with one another, we have an ultimate court of appeal—this inner law—which furnishes us with means which may explain and reconcile such conflict. This

internal law is therefore the ultimate standard and test of moral judgments.

What, then, is the "precise nature of this Internal Law ? The nature of this law has been differently conceived by different writers, thus giving rise to various theories which are collectively called *Intuitionism* or *Intuitionism*.

The common characteristics of Intuitionism are that rightness and wrongness consist in a special kind of quality inherent in the actions themselves independent of their consequences to happiness ; and that there is a law of nature requiring that all rational actions should have the special quality of rightness and be free from the special quality of wrongness ; and that we have a *special faculty* for perceiving these qualities of actions *intuitively* or *directly*—an innate and instinctive faculty of perception, for perceiving moral distinctions—meaning that as we have special perceptive faculties for colours, forms, sounds, &c., so we have a special perceptive faculty of moral qualities of actions.

The main forms of Intuitionism are the following :—

(i) **Moral sense** :—The moral faculty is a passive and innate capacity of sensibility, feeling or emotion ( somewhat like the feeling of the beautiful ) through which different actions produce different feelings in us—either pleasurable feelings of satisfaction, approval, admiration, etc. or painful feelings of dislike, disgust, remorse, etc. So that we judge the quality of the action as good or bad, right or wrong, according to the feeling which it produces in us, somewhat as we judge the *secondary*

*qualities* of material things from the feelings of sensations which they produce in us. This is called the *Moral sense* or *Sentimental* view, because it makes the Internal Law to be a faculty of sensibility or feeling. ( Shaftesbury and Hutcheson ).

(ii) **Rational View** :—The moral faculty is an *active faculty* of *intellectual discrimination*, discerning the relations between actions and their circumstances, as ordinary intellect discerns relations of proportions, symmetry, harmony, fitness, consistency and inconsistency between things—assuming that the quality of rightness or wrongness is a *rational quality* consisting in, or depending on the relation between the action and its circumstances. ( Calderwood. )

This is called the *Rational* or *Intellectual* view, because it makes rightness and wrongness consist in *relation* which is perceived intellectually. It has two forms :

(a) The moral faculty gives an intellectual discrimination of relation, and nothing more, i. e. does not contain any element of feeling—is an intellectual faculty and nothing more. (Cudworth, Clarke, and Calderwood.)

(b) It is not merely intellectual, but contains a capacity of feeling also, and gives not only “a discrimination of the understanding, but also a feeling of the heart” —i. e. is a faculty both of *intellectual discrimination of relation, and of emotion*—the former enabling us to discern what is right and wrong, and the latter impelling us to do what is right. ( Butler, Price, Reid, D. Stewart and Whewell ).

(iii) **Conscience** :—The moral faculty as regar-

ded by the last class of writers is especially called *Conscience*. Conscience is thus the faculty of *intellectual discrimination* which discerns intuitively the rightness or wrongness of actions and is also accompanied with a characteristic element of feeling, viz, the feeling of approval, or disapproval, satisfaction or remorse. Conscience thus contains two elements :— *a*) an *intellectual element* ; it is a faculty of judgment—it affirms an action to be right or wrong ; and *b*) an *emotional element* ; it gives a feeling of approval when the action is right, and a feeling of disapproval, when it is wrong and again, when the action is our own, we feel satisfaction or remorse according as the action is right or wrong.

The essential characteristics of conscience are held to be :—*a*) that it is *intuitive*, i. e. it discerns the moral worth of an action *immediately*, not by any process of reasoning. Thus the acts of stealing, dishonesty, etc. are condemned, and their opposite approved *instinctively*. *b*) It is *underived*, i. e. it is the ultimate fact of our nature, so that its dictates are absolutely binding upon us irrespective of any prudential consideration. And, *c*) it is *universal*, i. e. it is present in every individual, in every race, and in every age. It does not, of course, imply that it is present in equally developed form among them. It is universal in the same sense as Reason is universal. Like Reason it is capable of development, so that the conscience of one man, race and age may not be exactly the same as the conscience of another man, race and age. Still it is innate just as our other faculties are and just as universal as these are in all normally con-

stituted human beings. Hence it should be remembered that when we speak of conscience as the ultimate principle of morals, it is not the conscience of this or that individual. An *individual conscience* is nothing but the consciousness of agreement or disagreement of his action with his own standard of right ; and if this standard is defective, his conscience is so too. Of course every man is bound to follow his own standard of right, if he likes to be conscientious ; but still his action may be wrong or at least not entirely right, if his standard is defective. This is the reason why we call a man “fanatic” who strictly and unflinchingly follows his own defective standard. Therefore conscience which is the ultimate standard of morality is the *universal conscience*, the ultimate principle by means of which we recognise the rightness and wrongness of actions, and which is latent in all men in all ages, but which is more fully developed in some men than in others. This principle of universal conscience is called by Reid and the Scottish School in general the *principle of common sense*, because it is held to be common or universal throughout the whole human race.

Dr. Martineau, the greatest exponent of the intuitional morality in recent times, seems to approach the Moral Sense-theory more than any other. Yet his doctrine contains some peculiarities which are absent in all other doctrines. It deserves therefore a special notice here.

He is in emphatic agreement with all other intuitionists in maintaining that the Moral Faculty is *unique and unanalysable*, intuitive and universal ; but he differs

from them in this :—what our conscience *directly* tells us is not the moral worth of our actions, but the moral worth of the motives or “springs of actions.” When two or more springs of actions fight with one another in the field of our self-conscious mind, drawing us in different directions, our conscience intervenes and decides between their respective claims ; it declares *immediately* their moral worth or value and enjoins us to follow that which has the higher value in preference to the other or others which have the lower. Thus, “their *moral valuation* intuitively results from their *simultaneous appearance*.” Therefore, “the whole ground of ethical procedure consists, in this: that we are sensible of a *graduated scale of excellence* among our natural principles ( i. e. the springs of actions ), quite distinct from the order of their intensity, and irrespective of the range of their external effects.” ( Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, P 49 ). Thus, “The sensibility of the mind to the graduations of this scale is precisely what can we call *conscience* ;—the *knowledge with one’s self* of the better and worse ; and the more delicate the knowing faculty, the finer are the shades perceived. Whoever feels no difference of worth between one propension and another, and yields himself with equal unreluctance to appetite or affection, to resentment or compassion, and emerges from them with equal cheerfulness, is without conscience.” (Ibid, p 53 ). “Conscience, then, is the critical perception we have of the relative authority of our several principles of action. The sense of that authority is *implicitly* contained in the

mere natural strife of these principles within us : when *explicitly* brought into view by reflective self-knowledge, it assumes a systematic character, and asserts its prerogative as the judicial regulator of life. Its proper business is to watch the forces of our nature, and keep every thing in its place." ( Ibid, p 54 ).

From the above summary of the intuitional views of morality, it is plain that it is not always easy to say what the precise object of the intuition is. (a) Some hold that intuition consists in discerning the moral qualities inherent in *each separate action by itself*, e. g. this particular action of honesty is right, and in making general moral laws—e. g. honesty in general is right—to be generalisations from particular instances of intuition. This kind of intuitionism has been called by Sidgwick *Perceptual Intuitionism*. It may also be called *Inductive Intuitionism*. ( Butler, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Adam Smith, Martineau, etc ).

(b) Some others hold that what is discerned intuitively is not the rightness or wrongness of particular actions, but rather *the general moral laws*, that all actions of such and such a form are right or wrong—e. g. Justice is right ; Benevolence is right, and so on ; or stealing is wrong ; slandering is wrong, and so on. So that the judgment of a particular action as right or wrong, will take the following form of a syllogism—

All justice is right.

This action is just.

∴ This action is right.

This is perhaps the common form, and may be called



*Common sense Intuitionism* as being held by Reid, Stewart, and the so-called common sense school, making the particular judgment to be a deduction. It has this advantage that it accounts for the uncertainty and the difference of opinions which sometimes prevail about particular moral intuitions. It has been called by Sidgwick *Dogmatic or Deductive Intuitionism*.

c) Some others, again, hold that we cannot be satisfied with merely saying that we perceive particular actions to be individually right or wrong, nor with saying that all actions of a general form are right or wrong ; but we should also try to discern the *reason* why they are right or wrong, and say that the intuition which tells us that particular action or kind of action is right or wrong, must or may, perfectly and clearly tell us at the same time why it is so, or in what its rightness or wrongness consists—the ground of its rightness or wrongness. This form of Intuitionism has been called by Sidgwick *Philosophical Intuitionism*.

Now English Intuitionism began with the philosophical form ; because it began as a *refutation* against Hobbes, who had given a reasonable ground for his own particular egoistic form of morality. Therefore the antagonistic morality was bound to give a reason also and thereby to be philosophical like Hobbes'. Hence the Intellectual ( or Dianœtic ) system of Cudworth, Clarke and Price, which tried to explain rightness philosophically as a form of harmony, congruity, fitness or proportion of things. This was followed by the Perceptual or Inductive form, contained in the Moral Sense or Sen-

timental theory, which, again, led to the Dogmatic or Deductive form, but was revived by Dr. Martineau in recent times in a slightly different form.

### **General review of Intuitionism.**

(1) The intellectual and emotional elements involved in conscience are sometimes found to conflict with each other. Our intellect may choose a line of action, but this choice is sometimes found to be immediately followed by a feeling bearing a close resemblance to remorse. Thus when a devout christian chooses, for the first time, to take a row or attend a concert on Sunday, his choice is closely followed by a feeling of repentance. Here his intellect chooses one line of action, and his emotion clings to another. Such conflict can be explained, not by conscience itself, but by a higher standard which can sit in judgment upon conscience.

(2) The moral principles, which are represented as the generally recognised principles of right and wrong, and thus universal and unanalysable, are found, on examination, to be contingent and variable. Thus the principle "Thou shalt not steal" was never held universally to be binding. The Spartans encouraged theft if it was cleverly done, so that the perpetrator could escape with impunity. Very different views with regard to the exact nature of "equality" implied in the conception of Justice were held by different stages of human civilisation, and by different communities in the same stage. The "community of wives" was enjoined by Plato in his

Republic, as a necessary condition of an Ideal State, which is now positively condemned by all civilised people. So that not only these principles are not universally applicable, but they are found to conflict with one another. Thus, as we have found above, the principle "Thou shalt not steal" comes into conflict with "Thou shalt do no morder". "Thou shalt not lie"; with "Thou shalt do no injury to your fellow being", etc. Instances like these may be adduced indefinitely. But they are sufficient to show that the so-called moral principles are never universal and unanalysable in the sense in which they are held to be so by the intuitionists.

Besides, their intuitive character may be shown to be *empirical* only, i. e. they are intuitive in the sense of being *instinctive*. Their supposed necessity is merely *subjective*, i. e. as the result of constant obedience to the morality of the age and country in which a man lives, and being a child of the race, the heir of all the ages of its experience, the morality of which he accepts unquestioningly.

(3) Thus, Intuitionism gives only a psychological description of the moral consciousness. It merely tells us the "what" of morality, i. e. it merely describes the moral facts, and therefore does not explain the "why" of the facts. It merely affirms that the moral facts are necessary and irresistible; but it does not tell us any thing of the *objective basis* of these facts—the reasons why the moral principles are such. In short, it does not investigate the ultimate nature of morality itself. "The real question of Ethics is not, as intuitionists have stated

and answered it ; How do we come to know moral distinctions ? but, what are these distinctions ? What is the moral Ideal—the single criterion which shall yield all such distinctions ?” ( Prof. J. Seth’s “A study of Ethical Principles” p 187 ).

(4) The so-called moral principles are merely *formal* and *abstract* ; they cannot, therefore, explain completely the concrete moral actions. The concrete is more than the abstract. So that they have to be modified according to circumstances. They may, therefore, serve, at most, the purpose of a “practical guidance to common people in common circumstances ;” but “the attempt to elevate them into a system of scientific truths” is necessarily a failure.

(5) The authority of conscience is still *external*. To be truly internal, conscience should be conceived as identical with our whole self, not with a *part* of it only. For if it is only a part of the whole self, its law cannot be the law of the whole self, nor can its dictates be binding upon the same ; so that the law of a part is still external to the whole.

Is conscience a part or the whole of the self ? “Conscience is not explained, as on any true theory it must be, as the self judging of its own acts, but as a special faculty. It is the ‘Faculty of Moral Judgments’—an innate and inexplicable power of moral discrimination, sitting apart from the rest of human consciousness, like the priestess in the oracle at Delphi, and authoritatively imposing its decrees upon the human will.” ( Prof. Muirhead’s “Elements of Ethics” p 84 ). In words of Dr.

Martineau, we may say that, it can act irrespective of the will and character, and make a choice that is absolutely unmotivated.

Such conception of conscience is wholly inconsistent with the modern conception of mind as an organic unity. It commits the fallacy of "Faculty Psychology" which has been so emphatically condemned by all leading modern psychologists. (See Prof. Stout's *Manual of Psychology*, Book I. Chap. III.).

Again, even if we can save its life from the onslaught of psychology, we cannot, by means of it, account for our moral life. For the very essence of morality consists in free obedience to a self-imposed law. But we have found above that the law of conscience is the law of a part, not of the whole of the self. So that it is still *external*.

(B) **Moral Reason** :—Hence the need for a truly internal law. And this need was first supplied by Kant in his "Critique of Practical Reason" and "Metaphysic of Morals." Kant's ethical doctrine was essentially anti-theistic to Hedonism. *Hedonism* is founded on the idea of the self as primarily and essentially a feeling subject, a subject which is always guided by the sole desire for securing for itself the greatest sum total of pleasure. Kant's doctrine, on the other hand, is pure *rationalism*. "It is founded on the view that the predominating element in the self is *reason*, which, as essentially opposed to desire, asserts itself in the authoritative and categorical demands of the moral imperative. On this theory the end of man as a rational

being is unconditional obedience to this imperative, as the law of his inner being or true self. Pleasure, so far from being the end, cannot enter into our conception of the end of action without vitiating any claim which it may otherwise have to be considered virtuous. In order to be good an act must be done out of reverence for the reason which enjoins it, and without respect to the consequences. As opposed to the theory that the end is pleasure for pleasure's sake, this theory has aptly been called the theory of duty for duty's sake." Prof. (Muirhead's "Elements of Ethics" pp 122—123 ).

Kant's theory, then, recognises *right* as distinct from *expediency*. It clearly emphasizes the essential distinction between what is right and what is prudent. No doubt, *prudence* is also a creature of reason, because it is nothing but the regulation and organisation of conflicting desires by reason in order to secure the greatest possible sum-total of selfish advantage. Yet, it is held by this theory that desires are, by their very nature, antagonistic to and in everlasting war with reason as such, and therefore, they should be denied the right of determining virtuous actions. Virtue consists in such denial and in doing actions only in obedience to the moral law. "Right thus stands out clear from the taint of all prudential considerations." If the motive of an action contains any such considerations, its moral value is destroyed.

This essential and qualitative difference between prudence and morality explains the absolute character of the moral law. Every idea of "good" which is determind

by prudential considerations provides only such principle of action that is *hypothetical* or *conditional*. Obedience to it can never be required *unconditionally*. "You *ought* to do this" can have no meaning, as an unconditional command, to the consistent Hedonist. The rejoinder, "Yes, *provided* I recognise that action as a means to my greatest pleasure ; but I don't" puts an end to the matter." But the principle of action dictated by reason is different. Reason is the universal and essential elements in man's nature—it is his true or permanent self, as opposed to the transient phases of appetite and passion which he shares with the lower animals. "Its law accordingly is the law of liberty. To disobey reason is to renounce man's special birth-right of freedom." It is binding upon him as a rational being. "To deny its authority is to deny himself part or lot in the kingdom of humanity." Hence the moral law is of the nature of *categorical imperative*, and the only absolutely good thing is the *Good Will*, which means the will determined by reverence for reason as revealed in the moral law and untainted by any lower motive. This absolute moral law which is the Law of Reason, has been stated by Kant in the following way :—

"Act only on that maxim ( or principle ) which thou canst at the same time will to become a universal law, or act only in such a way as you could will that every one else should act under the same general conditions."

**Criticism** :—(A) The defect of Kant's "ascetic theory is not that it lays emphasis on the negative aspect of morality, but that it treats that aspect as the

final one. Self-realisation cannot consist in mere resistance to the suggestions of desire. If it did, the satisfaction of one element in human nature would mean the destruction of another ; the realisation of reason would mean the annihilation of feeling and desire. Seeing, moreover, that virtue consists in free determination by reason, and reason is not otherwise definable on this theory save as the antithesis of desire, the virtuous man, so far from being independent of desire, is dependent on its continued resistance for the opportunity of realising himself in conflict with it. Virtue, in fact, lives in the life of its antagonist. Final and complete victory over it would involve its own destruction along with the destruction of desire. This, which might be called the "*paradox of asceticism*," is the explanation of the failure which has attended all attempts to organise a practical scheme of life upon the basis of this theory." ( Prof. Muirhead's *Elements of Ethics*, pp 129-30 ).

Another consequence of this forced separation of reason from desire is, that man's ordinary daily life, which is predominantly a life of desire, has no place in the realm of morality,—it has no moral significance—it is even immoral. If an action is wrong, simply because we *desire to do* it, then no action, that springs spontaneously from the natural affections, as love, compassion, fear, hope, &c. can be morally right. If I give alms to the poor out of pity ; if I sacrifice my most cherished and best interests to those of my country simply out of love, my actions will be, from Kant's points of view, positively immoral, this is rather doing violence to the



common sense of mankind. In fact, it is difficult to see how, by denying human desire a place in the good life, we can realise the moral ideal at all. For only through right activities we can realise the ideal, and these activities are always prompted by desires when rightly chosen.

(B) The moral law as laid down by Kant is as abstract and one-sided as his conception of reason. It may safely be regarded as a *negative* guide in conduct. We can ascertain, by reference to it, what we *should not do* under certain circumstances. Thus, if we find, in some instance, that the principle of our action cannot be universalised—cannot be regarded as the principle which every man can act on under similar circumstances, we can safely infer that the action is wrong. But we cannot regard it as a *positive* guide. We cannot deduce a complete code of our positive duties from it, just as we cannot deduce the knowledge of any actual concrete law of nature from the formal principles of Logic. Indeed, its formal character becomes more evident when we apply it to concrete cases. Thus, if, in the first instance, we apply it to a *general species* of action, for instance, “lying” and deduce a law such as “all lying is wrong” or “Thou shalt not lie” from it, because its principle cannot be universalised, then, we make the maxim very *stringent*. But, as we have found in our criticism of Intuitionism, there is no commandment—no moral law which does not admit, under certain circumstances, of any exception. If I lie to save the life of an innocent man, who is a tower of strength to my country, and who will

be able, if his life be saved, to do an immense good not only to my society, but also to the community of mankind at large, I am certainly justified in doing so.

Again, if we apply the maxim to *particular acts*, for instance, a particular act of lying, we meet with further difficulties : Every man is apt, or rather tempted, to regard the principle of his action, however wrong, as capable of being universalised at least at the time of its performance. No body does wrong *Knowingly* ; at least at the time of its performance he thinks his action right, although after further reflection he may come to know its wrongness. So that, in this case, Kant's dictum gives us a very lax standard.

In the third place, Kant's maxim is a maxim of *self-consistency*, i. e. it enjoins us that we should be self-consistent in our actions—we should not act on one principle and expect others to act on different principles under the same circumstances. But the application of the maxim presupposes a certain given material. Thus, the self-consistency of "stealing" rests on the presupposition of the right of private property. If we respect the right of private property, then "stealing" would be self-inconsistent, otherwise not. Breaking of promise would be self-inconsistent, if we recognise the duty of making promise, otherwise not. Thus, we find that the possibility of the application of Kant's maxim depends on the existence of concrete rights and duties which cannot be deduced from it. Kant was aware of this defect and tried, in his later writings, to derive the concrete duties from other sources, viz—our own Perfection

and the Happiness of others. "Thus the positive side of duty would be derived largely from utilitarian considerations, while the moral reason would simply urge us to be self-consistent. Kant's view thus approximated to that developed in recent times by Dr. Sidgwick."

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## CHAPTER II.

### Will and Desire.

We have found that the essential defect of Kant's ethical doctrine is its purely *formal* and *abstract* character. It takes merely an abstract view of the nature of the self—it is purely *rational*, and can exist and act as pure reason. Thus, desires are repudiated as external intruders which somehow come to drag the self into impure paths. So that the law of Moral Reason is merely the law of *formal consistency*, just as the laws of Identity and Non-contradiction are the laws of formal consistency of thought. But the human self is never pure reason whether theoretical or practical. The concrete self is a unity—a systematic whole. It is a rational principle which acts and realises itself in and through all the facts of our life. In moral sphere it is the reason which dictates an absolute and universal law for the guidance of our conducts determined by our desires which it itself makes in order to realise the absolute Good conceived by itself as the ultimate End of the universe as a rational system. So that the true moral law is the law of the *total self* which is the unity of both the *matter* ( i.e. desires ) and the *form* ( i.e. reason ).

Now to understand the true nature of this self, we should thoroughly investigate the nature of Will and Desire. Hence we should plunge ourselves, for a while, into matters purely psychological.

## Will and Desire.

(1) **Desire** :—To understand the nature of desire we should first understand the roots out of which desire is developed by the action of reason upon them. What are these roots of desire ? They are *wants* and *appetites*. Man has a double being. He is a rational spirit united with a physical organism. Now, so far as he is a physical being, like other physical beings, that is, vegetables and lower animals, he has wants and appetites arising out of the necessity for the preservation of life. Vegetables have *wants* only, which are nothing but blind tendencies towards some ends the realisation of which conduces to the preservation of life. Animals have *appetites* which are also blind tendencies like the wants ; but the difference is this, that while the wants are *unconscious*, i. e. while vegetables are not conscious either of the wants, or of the ends towards which they tend, the appetites are, to a certain extent, *present to consciousness*, i. e. animals are, to a certain extent, conscious of both the appetites and the ends, i. e. the objects which will satisfy these appetites. Thus, we find that the distinctive characteristic of appetite is *consciousness* which is absent in vegetable want. The animal appetite is thus a want upon which the element of consciousness has been superimposed by the nature of the animal which is itself conscious.

When we pass to a still higher stage of organic life,— i. e. to man, we find that another and a higher element,

viz, that of Reason, is superimposed upon wants and appetites, thus giving rise to what we call *human Desires*. This is therefore the process of transition : vegetables have wants only ; animals have both wants and appetites ; human beings have wants, appetites and desires. Thus, desires are *distinctively* human, ( Prof. Green ) ; for they are absent in all other beings. What, then, is a desire ? In desires, "there is not merely the consciousness of an object with an accompanying feeling of pleasure and pain, but also a recognition of the object as a good, or as an element in a more or less clearly defined end. The hunger of an animal is different from the mere want of nutriment in a plant ; but the desire for food in a man is scarcely less different from mere hunger. A man may be hungry and yet not desire food. In the desire of food there is involved, in addition to the hunger, the representation of the food as an end which it is worth while to secure." (Prof. Mackenzie's *Manual of Ethics* p. 73). Thus desires are the creatures of reason acting upon wants and appetites, i. e. instinctive impulses, and transforming them into impulses of a quite new order and quality, which drag the will to different ends conceived by reason itself as the means to the realisation of the self.

Now, if this function of reason is necessary for the formation of those desires which originate in animal wants and appetites in the sense that without such wants and appetites they would not be at all, it is far more necessary for the origination of those desires which are *purely* human, i. e. which are not dependent upon animal wants and appetites, but upon conditions possible only to self-

conscious beings. Thus our envies, jealousies, ambitions, benevolence, patriotism, not to speak of our desires for knowledge, morality and religion, are all in their proper nature distinctively human, because all founded on interests possible only to rational beings.

In this way we find that reason and desires are closely connected with one another. Desires are formed by reason by its action upon animal wants and appetites, and upon purely human interests ; reason forms them, because the attainment of their objects satisfies the rational self. Hence reason and desires represent two elements of the self. To express this truth in words of Prof. Green :—"The real agent called desire is the man or self or subject as desiring ; the real agent called Intellect is the man as understanding, as perceiving, and conceiving ; and the man that desires is identical with the man that understands. Yet, on the other hand, to desire is clearly not the same thing as to understand." ( *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 134 ).

(2) **Will** :—*What, then, is Will ? What is its relation to Desire ?* "But if it be true that all desire is the act of a subject which thinks in desiring, all thought the act of a subject which desires in thinking, what is to be said of willing ?" Will cannot be identified with desire, because it is a common fact that a man has power of willing to resist all his desires, even the strongest, and of acting accordingly. Again, it cannot be identified with thought or intellect, because it is a familiar fact that a man may "know the better and prefer the worse." These facts suggest two important questions, viz, (a)

what is the relation between *Will and Desire*, and (b) what is the relation between *Will and Intellect* ?

(a) **Will and Desire** :—To understand the relation between will and desire, we should first understand what is meant by the ‘conflict of desires’, i. e. the conflict in which a man under the influence of one desire wills to do what is inconsistent with that which he wills to do under the influence of another desire, at the same time. Hence during such a conflict a man wills to do different things, sometimes quite opposite to one another, at the same time. But, “does a man ever really desire, at the same time and *in the same sense*, objects which he recognises as incompatible with each other ?” Is it possible for a man to desire incompatible objects at the same time and in the same sense ? The answer must be in the negative. For if by a desire is meant that which is the result of the action of the rational self upon the blind impulses, it is impossible for the same self to form two incompatible desires at the same time. In fact, by the conflict of desires is meant, either the conflict of the blind impulses of our nature, drawing us to different objects at the same time, or the conflict of desires which are present to our consciousness, not simultaneously, *but in rapid succession* amounting almost to simultaneity. In the latter case, the conflict is truly the conflict of desires, while in the former case, the conflict is not the conflict of desires at all. As the rational self of every man develops and consequently passes through different grades of rationality, it is possible for the same self to form incompatible desires at rapidly succeeding moments ;



or view the same matter from different standpoints which it may occupy alternately or almost simultaneously, giving rise to very various desires in the mind in consequence.

If we take such view of the conflict of desires, which is undoubtedly the true view, it is easy to see that there is no real opposition between Will and Desire. Will, then, means *the adoption of a desired object*—the identification of the self's interests, dominant at the time, with the realisation of the idea of an object of a particular desire in preference to the solicitations of other conflicting desires. The desire, the object of which is thus adopted, is specially called "motive." ( see Prof. Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p 152 )

This view obviates also the difficulties arising out of the so-called capability of Will to resist all the desires. The desires are formed from different points of view ; and it is possible for the Will, i. e. the rational self, to resist them by forming a desire from a still higher point of view.

(b) **Will and Intellect ;**—We have found above, that the relation between desire and reason or intellect is a very close one ; and we have also found that desire, in its true sense, is closely connected with will. Hence there is similarly close connection between will and intellect. This does not imply that they are identical ; they are rather two distinct employments of the mind, the former being called *practical* and the latter *speculative*. In intellect, the work of mind is directed to that discovery of relations between existing things which

enables it to regard them as one ; in will, its work is to conceive the idea of an end or object of desire, and then to proceed to realise it in order to satisfy its dominant interests. The will then is not some distinct part of a man, separable from intellect and desire, nor a combination of them. It is simply the man himself, and only so the source of action. It is the same mind which wills as well as knows.

We may therefore conclude that Will, Desire and Intellect are three distinct but closely connected functions of the same mind and therefore neither of them is possible without the others. The self is a self-conscious unity, no function of which can be absolutely separated from the rest.

We shall consider here two other important things, viz, the relation between will and character, and will and act.

(i) **Will and Character** :—What is character ? Character is commonly defined as that which is constituted by “set habits of will”. “A character”, said J. S. Mill, “is a completely fashioned will”, i. e. will in which there is a continuous dominance of *a particular point of view*. Thus a good man is one who often acts from the point of view of duty ; a bad man is one who constantly acts from a point of view quite opposite to that of Duty. A miser is always guided by a particular point of view, viz, love of money. A fanatic is one in whom a particular point of view is so dominant as to exclude all other higher points of view. But the character of man is not in all cases so simple. It is generally a complex

structure, containing several points of view, some of which may be incompatible, and all of which stand to one another in certain definite relations. The different relations in which they stand to one another in different men constitute the differences of their character.

Now, it is generally supposed that every man is born with a character. According to this view, the different points of view which constitute a character are merely natural tendencies and inherited dispositions ; so that character is a habit of will in the sense that these blind impulses always determine the will to act in particular ways, leaving no room for any independent action of the will. How can we reconcile this view of character with that set forth above ? In this way : These blind impulses of our nature which may be regarded as "given" and independent of will in a sense, never remain what they are in a moral being ; for they can determine the will to act in so far as the will consents to be so determined ; otherwise the resulting action will not be voluntary and therefore morally imputable ; that is to say, they can determine our voluntary actions—they can be desires or motives of our voluntary actions—in so far as they are moulded and modified by the action of will and intellect upon them. Thus, "character is the acquired habit of regulating these tendencies in a certain manner, in relation to consciously conceived ends. In other words, character is not something separate from will and acting upon it from without, but is the habitual mode in which will regulates that system of impulses and desires which, looked at subjectively, is the field of its exercise".

( Prof. Muirhead's Elements of Ethics, p. 55. )

Again, character never remains fixed and static ; it grows and changes from moment to moment. So that its constituent elements—the different points of view—never remain the same. It passes through different stages lower and higher, and in each stage it contains one; or rather a number of different points of view related to one another in a definite way. Each such stage may be regarded “a universe of desires.” “Each desire also belongs to a particular universe, and loses its meaning if we pass out of that universe into another. This universe to which a desire belongs is the universe that is constituted by the totality of what we call a man's *character*, as that character presents itself at the time at which the desire is felt. It is, in short, the universe of the man's *ethical point of view* at the moment in question.” ( Prof. Mackenzie's Manual of Ethics, p 75 ). From this it is evident that desire is closely connected with character—it is rather the *internal* expression of character.

**Character and Conduct :**—The relation between character and conduct is very important from the point of view of Ethics. A hot controversy has been raised round it between, *Necessarianism* or *Determinism*, and *Libertarianism*. According to both the relation between character and conduct is merely external. According to the former, the relation is one of cause and effect—the conduct as an effect *necessarily* follows upon character as the cause ; whereas according to the latter the will is capable of acting in an independent

line of its own, without relation to character.

But we have found above that character is the product of will—it is the set habits of will, i. e. habits of acting in particular ways, acquired by a series of voluntary actions performed to realise particular ends. Thus conduct which is the external expression of will is also the external expression of character, as desire or motive is the internal expression of it. Now, if conduct is the external expression of character, how is it that the same character expresses itself in incompatible actions? The answer is this: we have also found that character is at the same time *static* and *changeable*—it undergoes a process of evolution. So far as it is static, the action must be regarded as the expression or embodiment of character. Only on this supposition we can explain moral responsibility. If the action is not the expression of character it is impossible to see how a man can be held accountable for his action. The very possibility of any moral imputation rests on the supposition that the action is the issue of will and therefore of character. “Any other hypothesis as to the relation between character and conduct—whether it be that of the determinist, who supposes action to flow from previous conditions, as physical effects follow upon their causes, or that of the libertarian, who isolates the will from character as a mysterious power of unmotivated choice—is incompatible with human responsibility. On the former hypothesis a human action is only one of a series of natural effects, for which it would be as absurd to hold the agent accountable as it would be to hold the sun

accountable for heat or the cloud for rain. On the latter supposition acts of choice are traced to an abstract force or entity, conceived of as without organic relation to the concrete self or personality who alone can be the subject of moral censure or approval." (Prof. Muirhead's *Elements of Ethics*, p 56 ).

Again, in so far as it evolves and changes, all its stages are built up by the activity of will, i.e. by the performance of a series of voluntary actions. Thus, as character determines the will and its activity, so will determines character by its activity. We have found above that these different stages of the evolving character represent different "universe of desires", making the conflict and incompatibility of desires possible.

Now this organic relation, between character and conduct—the relation which makes action and reaction between them possible, i. e. enables character to determine the nature of conduct, and conduct, by its reaction, to modify and affect character, thus making its change and evolution possible, is simply the essence of a law of evolution in general. Thus we find in character two elements—one is universal and permanent, and another is particular and changeable. The former is the rational self itself which builds up character by its incessant activity ; the latter is the infinite variety of the stages of the same character which express themselves internally in desires and externally in overt actions.

**Character and circumstances** :—It is held by the determinists that conduct is the joint result of character and circumstances, i. e. character, as influenced

by external circumstances, determine the conduct. What are, then, these circumstances ? They are held to be external forces or conditions which act upon and influence the will and character in their activity. But when we examine closely into the nature of these circumstances, we find them to be not wholly external. In fact, circumstances have no meaning without their relation to character. The so-called external circumstances can determine our action in so far as they *agree* with character, i. e. are accepted by character as the suitable means of its expression. This is the reason why what is a circumstance to one man, is not a circumstance to another. Thus, a purse lying in a lonely place is a circumstance to a thief, because it will influence his character and induce him to steal it ; while it is no circumstance to a saint, because, it will not influence him at all. Hence there is no inconsistency in holding that conduct is the joint result of character and circumstances, if we understand by circumstances only those external forces and conditions which have been, by the reaction of character, made subservient to its own expression.

(b) **Will and Act** :—"Will and act are but the inner and outer side of the same phenomenon", i. e. the concrete conduct. But yet there is a distinction between the *mere will*, i. e. *intention*, *purpose* or *resolution*, and the carrying of it into overt act. Sometimes the will issues in action at once or immediately ; sometimes its carrying out is postponed to a remote future. In the latter case, it may fail to issue in action, owing to the intervention of other circumstances and considerations. The conditions

under which we make a resolution may have completely changed when the time for action comes. "Thus, "enterprises of great pith and moment", as well as more insignificant designs, may be frustrated by a change of universe ; and the "best intentions" or the worst, may lead to nothing". Thus, there is a great interval between a resolution and an overt act.

Though, thus, the will may sometimes fail to issue in action, the relation between the will and act is not accidental. When the will issues in action the nature of the action is completely determined by the nature of the will. A good will must issue in a good action and conversely, there can be no good action without a good will. The same relation holds between a bad will and a bad action. Of course, it is sometimes found that a good will issues in an action which produces bad results ; and a bad will issues in an action which produces good results, through the interference of other circumstances. But we have found that in so far as the results of the action are wholly determined by the interference of those circumstances which are entirely external and unforeseen, they have no bearing upon the goodness or badness of action. The goodness and badness of an action are wholly determined by the goodness and badness of the will respectively.

**Summary of results** :—Reason and will are two distinct, yet closely related functions of the self—in willing it reasons, and in reasoning it wills. This relation between them is especially found in the formation of desire. Desire, on the one hand, is the work of reason



acting upon wants, appetites and other purely human interests ; and on the other hand, it becomes will when its object is definitely adopted by the self as the means of its satisfaction. Character is constituted by the habits of willing the same object or a definite group of objects. Will and character are thus *organically* related. They act and react upon each other. Will builds up character by forming habits of action ; while character as a set of habits reacts upon will and determines the nature of its activity. Conduct has two sides—internal and external. Will is its internal side and overt act its external. Thus act is an issue of will ; but will is determined by character, so that act also is an expression of character. It is held by some that act is the joint result of character and circumstances. This is true only when circumstances mean influences which agree with character.

We thus find that the self is an organic unity, of which reason, will, desire and character are only different but closely connected functions. The same self is present in each ; and acts and realises itself according to immutable laws of its own nature. It is therefore impossible to separate any one of these functions absolutely from the rest.

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## Chapter: III.

### II. The standard of an End.

**Introduction** :—We have already found what the true nature of the self is. The true and concrete self is the reason which realises itself in and through desires. Thus the self has two sides—*reason and desire*. Now, it is possible to magnify the one side and ignore or undermine the other. If we emphasize the *rational* side, and ignore desire, and build up an ethical doctrine accordingly, we get the extremely rationalistic and rigoristic doctrine of Kant. If, again, we emphasize the *sentient* side of man in which desire has its root, and ignore or undermine the rational, we get a quite opposite doctrine.—*Hedonism* ( from Greek *hedone* = pleasure ). But we can take reason and desire both on equal terms, as equally important aspects of the self. In short, we can take the self in its organic unity. The ethical doctrine based upon this view is called *Perfectionism* ( Hegel, Green, Caird, Mackenzie, Muirhead, &c. ) or *Eudæmonism* ( Aristotle, James Seth, &c. ). Thus we get three fundamental ethical doctrines—*Rationalism or Rigorism*, *Hedonism*, and *Perfectionism or Eudæmonism*. The first includes the common *Intuitionism* and also the *higher Intuitionism* of Kant, and offers only the standard of a law. The other two give us the standard of an end. We have already dealt with the first and now proceed to deal with the other two.

(A) The standard as pleasure or happiness. ( Hedonism. )

(1) **The general characteristics of Hedonism** :—Hedonism is the general name for those ethical doctrines which assert that pleasure or happiness is the ultimate *end* of human life. As we have found, it is directly based on that view of the self which regards it as *essentially sentient*, confining the function of reason to that of a servant which merely devises means to the satisfaction of wants, appetites and other impulses of our nature which arise out of its sensibility. ( Hume ). Hence Hedonism is also called “the ethics of sensibility”. In its simplest form, Hedonism maintains that “conduct has value in proportion to the amount of pleasure it produces. One line of conduct is good relatively to another which, when it is possible to produce less, produces more pleasure ; that is bad which, it being possible to produce more, produces less ‘pleasure.’” ( Prof. Muirhead’s *Elements of Ethics*, p. 99 ). There is, therefore, no difference in motive—there is only one motive of action possible to men, viz, *desire for pleasure*. Thus the sinner and the saint both are moved by the same motive ; and the difference in their actions is due to the difference in the amounts of pleasure produced by them. The action of the sinner is bad, because it produces an amount of pain far exceeding his own momentary pleasure, to himself, his family and society. The action of the saint is good, because it produces an amount of pleasure far exceeding any pain to himself, his family and society.

Thus the balance of pleasure over pain determines the goodness, and the reverse, the badness of an action. And the degrees of goodness of actions are determined by the degrees of difference between the balances of pleasure over pain produced by the actions. Thus if one action produces a greater balance of pleasure over pain than another action, the former is better than the latter, although both of them are good. Hence the worst action is that which yields or tends to yield the least possible amount of pleasure. The best action is that which yields or tends to yield the greatest sum-total of pleasure.

**(2) Classification of hedonistic theories**  
 —Hedonism has assumed different forms. Some have tried to base it on the supposed psychological fact that *men naturally and always do seek pleasure*—the ultimate object of human desire is always pleasure. This form of Hedonism has been called by Sidgwick *Psychological Hedonism*. Some others, again, hold that whether men do naturally and always seek pleasure or not, they *ought* always to seek pleasure. This form of Hedonism has been called by Sidgwick *Ethical Hedonism*. Again, some maintain that what every man naturally seeks or ought to seek is his own *individual pleasure*. Sidgwick has called this form of Hedonism *Egoistic Hedonism*. Some others maintain, on the other hand, that what a man naturally seeks, or ought to seek is the pleasure of all human beings, or even of all sentient creatures. This view has been called by Sidgwick *Universalistic Hedonism*, and by some, as J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*.

**(3) Psychological Hedonism** :—Psychologi-

cal Hedonism, as we have found, is the doctrine that the ultimate object of desire is pleasure. Nearly all Hedonists, especially the Egoistic Hedonists have with more or less clearness adopted this position. The great modern exponents of this doctrine are J. S. Mill, and Dr. Bain. In his book on *Utilitarianism* Mill says :—"desiring a thing and finding it pleasant, aversion to it and thinking of it as painful, are phenomena entirely inseparable, or rather two parts of the same phenomenon ; in strictness of language, two different modes of naming the same psychological fact : that to think of an object as desirable and to think of it as pleasant are one and the same thing ; and that to desire any thing, except in proportion as the idea of it is pleasant, is a physical and metaphysical impossibility." The gist of the above evidently is that we desire an object because it is pleasant, and have aversion to an object because it is painful ; or in other words, the ultimate object of desire is pleasure and the ultimate object of aversion is pain.

The importance of psychological Hedonism in ethics seems to be that "if it can be shewn that each of us in acting *does* aim at *some* pleasure ( or absence of pain ) to himself, the demonstration would at least forcibly suggest as an ideal that he *ought* to seek his own *greatest* pleasure. It is important to observe that this is merely a suggestion. \* \* \* \* Still, though there is no cogent inference possible from the psychological generalization that his own pleasure is what each desires, to the ethical principle that his own greatest pleasure is for each the ultimate end at which it is reasonable to

aim, the mind has a natural tendency to pass from the one position to the other ; since if we once admit that our actual motives are always our own pleasures and pains of some kind, it seems *prima facie* reasonable to be moved by them in proportion to their pleasantness and painfulness, and to choose the greatest pleasure or least pain on the whole." ( Sidgwick's Methods of Ethics, P 42 ). It is therefore necessary to examine the doctrine carefully, although it is a doctrine purely psychological and has nothing to do with ethics, as we shall see later on.

### Examination of Psychological Hedonism.

(a) It is not true that we always desire pleasure. We have found above that our desires arise out of wants, appetites and other purely human interests. So that when these wants, appetites and interests are satisfied, pleasure follows as the result. Therefore, at least in some instances, our desires are directed towards objects suggested by these wants, appetites and interests, not towards any pleasure. Thus we must have *hunger* first, then we may have the pleasure of taking food as the consequence. No man can have the pleasure of *benevolent affections*, without having them first in his mind. In fact this is true of all pleasures. Pleasure ensues upon the satisfaction of certain wants, and the wants must be prior to the satisfaction. Of course when in this way we get pleasure we may desire it for its own sake afterwards. Thus, after once having the pleasure

from the satisfaction of hunger, we may be prompted to take food merely for the sake of pleasure. These facts clearly show that in some instances we desire objects other than pleasure and in some other instances we desire pleasure for its own sake.

(b) Even when we desire pleasure, the best way to get it is often to *forget* it. If we think too much about pleasure, pleasure escapes from us ; if, on the other hand, we do our duties disinterestedly—we direct our desires towards objects other than pleasure, pleasure would come to us of itself. “A certain degree of disinterestedness seems to be necessary in order to obtain full enjoyment. A man who maintains throughout an epicurean mood, fixing his aim on his own pleasure, does not catch the full spirit of the chase ; his eagerness never gets just the sharpness of edge which imparts to the pleasure its highest zest. Here comes into view what we may call the fundamental *paradox* of *Hedonism*, that the impulse towards pleasure, if too predominant, defeats its own aim.” ( Sidgwick’s *Methods of Ethics*, p. 47 ). Though this is not so apparent in passive sensual pleasures, it is especially true of all active enjoyments. Mill has recognised this fact to a certain extent. Dr. Bain also admits that it is possible, “for moments” to aim at other things than pleasure.

(c) Mill’s doctrine seems to arise from the confusion between “pleasures” and “pleasure”. Pleasure means an agreeable feeling or feeling of satisfaction ; while “pleasures” means things or objects which give pleasure when they are attained. Now, when we say that we

always desire pleasure, what we really mean to say is that we desire some objects the attainment of which gives us pleasure. Thus anything that we desire may be said to be a pleasure—i. e. something that will bring pleasure when attained. Therefore, the fact that we desire *pleasures*, is no evidence that we desire *pleasure*. (See, also Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 165 ). "A pleasant act, and an act pursuing pleasure", says Prof. James, "are, in themselves, two perfectly distinct conceptions. It is the confusion of pursued pleasure with mere pleasure of achievement, which makes the pleasure-theory so plausible to the ordinary mind." In short, the "pleasure of pursuit" is psychologically different from the "pursuit of pleasure".

(d) The above considerations seem to decide the case against the hedonists. Still, it may be contended in favour of the hedonists that these do not conclusively prove that the object of desire is something entirely different from pleasure. "For what is the object *apart from you* ? It exists through its relation to you—nay, it is yourself. What you desire is not a mere object, but an object as satisfying yourself, and what moves you to act is the idea of yourself as satisfied in the attainment of the object. Not the object, but the attainment of the object by you—or, more strictly still, your self-satisfaction in its attainment, is the end that moves you to strive after it. And in what can the satisfaction of the self consist but in a feeling of pleasure"? The real reply to the above contention consists in pointing out the fact that the human life is not merely sentient, and that the



satisfaction of the self does not consist in a feeling of pleasure. The concrete self contains the elements of both reason and feeling. "But to detach feeling from thought, and to say that we pursue pleasure only, is as unscientific as to detach thought from feeling, and to say that our active life contains no element of feeling at all. Life means interests or focal points of attention, apperceptive centres ; and we can neither have interests without a self to feel them, nor evolve them out of a merely sentient self." ( Prof. Seth's 'A study of Ethical principles', p. 74 ).

(4) **Ethical Hedonism** :—Ethical Hedonism, on the other hand, is the doctrine that we *ought* to seek pleasure, or more precisely, the greatest amount of pleasure. Now, is there any connection between these two forms of Hedonism ? Can we show that Ethical Hedonism is based upon, or can be derived from Psychological Hedonism ? The answer must be in the negative. For Psychological Hedonism simply states a psychological fact—it states what *is* ; whereas Ethical Hedonism states what *ought to be*. There is a very wide difference between *is* and *ought*—a *fact* and an *ideal*. Hence there is no necessary transition from the one to the other. Even if it be regarded as true that we naturally and always do seek pleasure, there would be no point in saying that we *ought* to seek it, and it would be absurd to say that we ought to seek the pleasure of others, unless we can show that it is coincident with our own. As we have found above, our natural inclination may suggest that we ought to satisfy it. But this is merely a

suggestion ; and there is no reasonable transition from the one to the other.

Mill has tried to base his ethical hedonism upon psychological. "The only proof," says Mill, "capable of being given that an object is visible, is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible, is that people hear it. In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it." The gist of this argument is, as seeing is the evidence of visibility and hearing the evidence of audibility, so desiring is the evidence of desirability. But really there is no analogy between the first and the second part of this argument. "Visibility" means capability of being seen ; and "audibility" means capability of being heard ; but "desirability" does not mean capability of being desired ;—it really means what *ought to be desired*. Hence Mill's argument involves the fallacy of confusion.

Thus we find that Ethical Hedonism cannot be based on, or derived from Psychological Hedonism. The former, therefore, does not stand or fall with the latter. It is an independent theory, and is not affected at all by the truth or falsehood of the latter.

What does then Ethical Hedonism precisely mean ? Does it simply say we ought to seek pleasure ? If so, it would certainly be a very vague and indefinite theory. Because we may find pleasure by acting in the most contradictory ways, so that it would give us no definite *criterion* of right and wrong in conduct. But if we say that we ought to seek the *greatest amount* of pleasure,

there would be a definite criterion by means of which we can easily ascertain what definite line of action would give such amount. Hence Ethical Hedonism, to be a consistent and practicable doctrine, will definitely state that we ought to seek the *greatest amount* of pleasure, or more precisely, the greatest surplus of pleasure over pain. ( See, above, sec. 1. )

Now, how can we estimate the greatest amount of pleasure? In estimating the amount of pleasure we should take into account at least two points—viz, *intensity* and *duration*. We prefer some pleasures to other, because they are more intense, or last longer. Pains also should be taken into account; for the result of an action is never *wholly* pleasurable, or *wholly* painful, but is always a mixture of pleasure and pain. Pain should be regarded as the opposite of pleasure, that is to say, if pleasure be regarded *positive*, pain should be regarded *negative*;—if pleasure be represented by  $+x$ , pain should be represented by  $-x$ . So that our end should be to secure the greatest sum of pleasures, or the smallest sum of pains.

There are two forms of Ethical Hedonism—*Egoistic* and *Universalistic*. We now proceed to consider them in detail one by one.

(1) **Egoistic Hedonism** :—The essential gist of Egoistic Hedonism is that each man ought to seek the *greatest amount of his own individual pleasure*. The typical representatives of this doctrine in its pure form were the Charvakists, the Cyrenaics and the Epicureans in ancient, and Hobbes and Gassendi in modern times.

(i) **Charvakism** :—*Charvakism* seems to be the most extreme form of Hedonism. The whole doctrine may be summarised in the following verse :

“While life is yours. live joyously ;  
None can escape Death’s searching eye :  
When once this frame of ours they burn,  
How shall it e’er again return ?”

Therefore, “the only end of man is enjoyment produced by sensual pleasures.” If it be said that, as all pleasures are always mixed up with some kind of pain, they should not be pursued at all, the reply would be that, it is our wisdom to enjoy as much pleasure, and to avoid as much pain, as we can. It is not therefore expedient to reject pleasures which our nature instinctively seeks, simply because they are accompanied by pains. So that if any one is so timid as to forsake a visible pleasure, he would be as foolish as a beast. Hence “eat, drink, and be merry” is the Charvakist’s ideal of life.

(ii) **Pure Hedonism or Cyrenicism** :—According to the Cyrenaics, the chief and only good of life is *pleasure* ; all pleasures are similar in quality ; they differ only in intensity or degree. It is useless to take into account the future pleasure. We are creatures of the moment and should make the most of each moment before it passes away—we should “guard the interests of the moment.” Therefore, not the prudence as taught by Socrates, but a reckless and unconditional surrender to the pleasures of the moment, is the true law of life. If so, then, it is our duty to live in the moments, trying

to get as much gratification as possible. "A life of feeling, pure and simple, heedless and unthinking, undisturbed by reason,—such is the Cyrenaic ideal."

But the Cyrenaics were unable to keep their self-consistency in the statement of their doctrine. "An ethics of pure sensibility, an absolute Hedonism is impossible." The good of a being who is both rational and sentient cannot be mere sentient. Consequently, they were compelled to admit that prudence is essential to the attainment of pleasure. A man must have perfect self-control, so that he may be the possessor of pleasures without being possessed by them. Aristippus, the founder of the school, went even so far as to assert that, "it was in the calm, resolute, skilful culling of such pleasures as circumstances afforded from moment to moment, undisturbed by passions, prejudices, or superstition, that he conceived the quality of wisdom to be exhibited." ( Sidgwick's History of Ethics, p 32 ).

(iii) **Modified Egoism or Epicureanism** :—  
Epicurus, the founder of the school, took up the principle of Aristippus that *pleasure* is a *positive good* and the only *ultimate good* ; and that all life and activity, if rightly directed, will have pleasure for its End ; that no pleasure is to be rejected unless it is followed by painful consequences, and no pain is to be chosen except as a means to pleasure ; and that all *virtuous conduct* ( of the Stoics ) and *speculative activity* ( of Aristotle ) are useless except in so far as they contribute to the happiness of the agent's life.

But he differs from the Cyrenaics in these :—

(a) He maintains that there is distinction of quality among pleasures. All pleasures are not equally good, and may be divided into *higher* and *lower* according to their permanence and bearing on the sum-total of the agent's happiness—most pleasures being productive, more or less, of pain by contrast or reaction. True ethical wisdom will consist in the selection of those which are most permanent, and leave no evil consequences behind. Hence, while Aristippus was for cultivating the *enjoyments of the senses*, Epicurus attached chief importance to the intellectual pleasures of thought, imagination, art, friendship, &c., and insisted on the restriction of sense-pleasures as resulting in greater pain than happiness in the end.

(b) He holds, again, that the *greatest happiness on the whole* consists, not in the number of positive gratifications ( which are generally productive of greater pain than happiness ), but in the *absence or prevention of pain* ; and that, therefore, the efforts of the wise man should be directed, not to the production of enjoyment, but to the alienation or prevention of pain, and hence—

(c) His important principle is that the *greatest happiness* is to be attained not by increasing the number and strength of our wants and desires in order that we may have a greater amount of enjoyment ( Aristippus ), because such desires cannot always be gratified, or their gratifications lead always to greater pain, so that the misery of unsatisfied desires and painful consequences far outweighs all the possible enjoyments, but by making

the greatest possible reduction of them—not by multiplying, but by diminishing them, so that their gratifications may be more keen and attended with less painful reaction.

The above principles are evidently founded on—

(d) The view that the normal and natural life is itself essentially pleasurable ; that happiness is the normal and natural state and pain only an accidental and occasional interruption which may be, to a great extent, avoided ; and that real happiness does not consist in continuous and violent artificial gratification of the senses, but in the exercise and enjoyment of vigorous and healthy bodily life and mental activity free from pain. This view is evidently opposed to the pessimistic view that pain is the positive and normal state, and pleasure only temporary relief.

Hence his reply to the Cynic and Stoic argument that pleasure is unattainable or self destructive ( viz, by reaction ), or depends on mere relief from pain, would be that a continuous series of violent gratifications will indeed defeat their own purpose, but that the *calm happiness* which consists in well-regulated activity free from pain is more or less attainable. And hence his—

(e) **Theory of Happiness** is that it consists, not in the artificial gratification of the senses, but in the calm, healthy and normal state of mind which accompanies well-directed activity and freedom from pain ; and the object of philosophy is to show how pain may be avoided and the life of calm and healthy contentment may be realised.

(iv) **Hobbesism** :—Hobbes' hedonism is directly based upon his psychological theory that every creature naturally seeks its own pleasure, because what is pleasurable is *self-preservative* ; and that, therefore, the only natural end and rule of conscious action to every creature will be its own pleasure, because pleasure is the *index* or *means* of *self-conservation*. Indirectly, his ethical doctrine grew and developed together with his theory of the origin of Society and Government. Men were originally in the "State of Nature" in which every individual, following the "natural law" or tendency of his own nature (i. e. his own pleasure and preservation) insisted on his own "natural rights" which included every thing needed for his own preservation and pleasure. But in this way different individuals would have equal natural rights to the same things and contended for them, so that the "State of Nature" was a state of warfare. But they found at length that insisting on their natural rights in this way defeated its own purpose by making them live in continual fear, strife and danger. Hence they were constrained to make peace and enter into a *contract* with each other by which they agreed to resign their natural rights into the hands of a common arbiter who would dispense them according to his own best judgment for the common good. This is the "*Social contract*" by which the "State of Nature" was suspended, and Society and Government were constituted, implying that men, for the sake of peace and security, resigned their natural rights to an *arbiter* or *governor* and pledged themselves to obey what rules and accept what



rights the Government may assign to them, while the governor was vested with power to enforce the submission of the refractory individuals by punishment. So that the original law of nature was now superseded by *social and Political Law*.

This theory about the origin of society and Government has modified Hobbes' ethical theory in this way : Though the sole end of individual is his own pleasure, yet the standard of this pleasure differs according as we live in the "state of Nature," or in the "state of Society." In the "*state of Nature*" it is the same as the *end*, viz, the *happiness of self*, or the "law of Nature" in the sense that the "law of Nature" for each individual is to seek his own preservation and happiness. In the "*state of Society*," or after the "Social contract" by which the "law of Nature" has been suspended, it is the *will of the legislator or Governor*. Hence in the social state it is the Government that determines what is right and what is wrong. But it is to be observed that though the *will of the State* is the standard, the *happiness* of the self is still the end, because the individual obeys the will in order to avoid the pains of punishment. And in actions, not prescribed by law, the original impulse of nature holds good, and each seeks naturally only his own pleasure. Hence even such apparently unselfish emotions, as sympathy, benevolence, parental affections. &c. are explained egoistically. In short, the theoretical basis of Hobbism is "the principle of egoism, that it is natural, and so reasonable, for each individual to aim solely at his own preservation or pleasure ; while, for practically

determining the particulars of duty it makes morality entirely dependent on positive law and institution."

(v) **The nature of the ultimate End of life according to Hinduism**:—According to nearly all the Hindu philosophy the ultimate end of life is, not the attainment of any positive pleasure, or any pleasant life, which is impossible in this world, but *the absolute liberation from pain*, although they differ in respect of method which should be adopted to attain that end. The *Sankhya* philosophy, the more advanced than all other, perhaps excepting the *Vedānta*, maintains that this ultimate end can be attained by obtaining the true knowledge of the nature of the Self ( *purusha* ) and the not-self ( *prakriti* ), and of their reciprocal relation ; and our duty consists in subduing or rather suppressing the not-self, and all desires and passions consequent upon its action on the self. The *Vedānta* philosophy, as interpreted by *Sankara* seems to agree with this view, and enjoins us to renounce the world and suppress all passions and desires excited by it including our physical organism, because they are the limitations which bind the soul and obstruct its liberation from the bondage of the flesh and blood. But the *Vedānta* philosophy as interpreted by others, as *Rāmānuja* and *Nimbarka*, holds a eudaemonistic view with regard to the ultimate end of life. ( See, below, "Eudaemonism" ). But all the *Sanhitas* and *Brahmanas*, on the other hand, maintain that the ultimate end of life is the attainment of pleasure or happiness here or hereafter, and the means, which should be adopted for that purpose, is the observance

of those rites which are enjoined in the *Sastras*. *Jaimini's Mimánsá* philosophy is an attempt to show the *rationale* of such Hedonism.

### **Critical examination of Egoistic Hedonism :—**

(i) Egoistic Hedonism, at least in its pure form, is always repulsive to our moral consciousness ; and for this reason it has been entirely abandoned now-a days as a distinct and independent theory. It is directly based upon Psychological Hedonism, and rests specially on the confusion that because the satisfaction of every end of our life is followed by pleasure, pleasure should be regarded as the sole end of our life. "Here, again, therefore, to say that we ought to seek *pleasures* is not to say that we ought to seek *pleasure*."

(ii) In recent times Dr. Sidgwick has tried to give this doctrine a plausible appearance and gone even so far as to hold that it is an inevitable element in a complete system of ethics. His argument is this : when we calmly and coolly reflect upon the ultimate nature of the end of life, we find that the only thing that we can reasonably seek—that we can regard as desirable in itself—is pleasure. Pleasure being thus the only desirable thing, the greatest pleasure must be the most desirable. Hence the pleasure which has greater intensity and duration than another is to be preferred ; and in estimating the value of pleasure we should take into consideration also the past and future pleasures regarding them as of equal value with the present one. ( See, *Methods of Ethics*, Book III. Chap. XIV, § 5 ).

The above argument, it is evident, is based on the supposition that pleasure is the only desirable thing—pleasure is the only thing that we ought to desire. But we have found, from the examination of Psychological Hedonism (c and d), and we shall find in the sequel, that this view is untenable.

(iii) The Egoistic Hedonism fails to account for the distinction between what *is* and what *ought to be*, i. e. it fails to account for the morality of an action. According to this theory, an action is moral when it follows the *greatest* pleasure; and the greatest pleasure, being always the *strongest* motive, must always prevail. So that the action must always be moral, and cannot be any thing else. Consequently, all human action is, as a matter of fact, moral, and every man is as moral as it is possible for him to be. What he *ought to be*, he always *is*. "If the 'two sovereign masters pain and pleasure 'determine what we shall do', it is hardly necessary for them also 'to point out what we ought to do'" The distinction between *is* and *ought to be* being thus abolished, the latter phrase should be expunged from the vocabulary of the hedonist.

(iv) If we follow the maxim of the Egoistic Hedonism we cannot maintain a *uniform standard* of morality. It is a well known fact that every man differs from another in respect of his susceptibility for pleasure and pain. What is a pleasure to one man is a pain to another, and *vice versa*. Stealing, for instance, is pleasurable to a thief, but painful to an honest man. Again, what is *most* pleasurable to one is *least*, or *far less*,

pleasurable to another. Such being the case, each man will have a standard of his own, i. e. each man's standard will differ from another's ;—what will be right to one, will be wrong to another, and *vice versa*. Thus stealing, being most pleasant to a thief will be right to him, and being most painful to an honest man, will be wrong to him.

So that the abolition of the uniformity of the standard of morality involves necessarily the abolition of morality itself.

The above considerations plainly show that the Egoistic Hedonism has no legs to stand on as a theory of morals ; it is rather a plain statement of a *fact* ( though it is not true ), not an *ideal*,—of what *is*, not what *should be*. It should, therefore, be rejected as a distinct and independent theory.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### Universalistic Hedonism. ( Old form ).

(II) **Transition to Universalistic Hedonism** :—We have found that the position of Egoistic Hedonism is untenable mainly for two reasons ;—(a) that it is directly based upon Psychological Hedonism which is not true ; and (b) that there is no logical transition from the latter to the former. We have also found that the general tenor of ancient Hedonism, both Indian and Greek, is egoistic ; so also is the case with modern English Hedonism as started by Hobbes. But there is one essential difference between ancient and modern Hedonism : the former is, in its most developed form, mainly *pessimistic*, while the latter is positively *optimistic* ;—the one teaches that the ultimate end of life is the absolute liberation from pain, while the other preaches that it is the attainment of positive pleasure. A further modification has been introduced into the hedonistic standpoint in modern times mainly by Hume, Bentham and J. S. Mill. The old standpoint is *individualistic*, the modern is *socialistic* or *universalistic* ;—“the greatest happiness of the individual” is the motto, according to the one, and “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” is the motto, according to the other. This shifting of the standpoint from the individual to society—from the units or parts to the whole—from the particular to the general—is the most characteristic feature of modern Hedonism.

For these reasons it has been called by Dr. Sidgwick *Universalistic Hedonism*, and by J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*, though the latter name is not so appropriate. Mill's statement of this form of Hedonism being most adequate, a summary of it is given below.

**(1) Universalistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism** :—We shall direct our attention especially to two important points in Mill's doctrine. Mill has introduced two essential modifications into the hedonistic view-point. In the first place, he has introduced a *new criterion* of morality, and in the second place, he has introduced *qualitative differences* in pleasures in opposition to his predecessors, Hume and Bentham. We shall, therefore, summarise his views mainly on these two points.

**(a) His new Criterion** :—As opposed to the egoistic hedonists Mill maintains "that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of ethics of utility. 'To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbour as oneself constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality.' (Utilitarianism, Chap. II. pp. 24—25). This formula had already been enunciated by Bentham in the following way : "Each to count for one, and no one for more than one". Again, as *mere* happiness cannot constitute the

criterion of right, because a man may feel happiness, by acting in contradictory ways, Mill observes that the "standard is not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the *greatest amount* of happiness altogether", i. e. happiness of all human beings, or even of all sentient creatures. (Ibid, p. 16.) Now, if it is asked what is meant by happiness, his answer is: "By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure." (Ibid, p. 10.)

**The proof of the criterion** :—Now, an important question suggests itself: what is the proof of the criterion? How can we show that the true and ultimate criterion of right is the "greatest happiness of the greatest number"? Mill offers the following proof: "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons. Happiness has made out its title as one of the ends of conduct, and consequently one of the criteria of morality." (Utilitarianism, chap. iv. p. 53). He then goes on to prove that happiness is the *only* good by showing that all other goods, which people are found to desire, are really *means* to happiness, but, having acquired, by association, all the interests felt for happiness, have come to be regarded as distinct goods.



**The sanction of the criterion :—**Another important question is : What is the sanction of the criterion ? Why am I obliged to adopt it as the guiding principle of my life ? Or to state the question in the words of Mill himself : “Why am I bound to promote the general happiness ? If my own happiness lies in something else, why may I not give that the preference ?” How can egoism and altruism be reconciled ? Mill’s answer is this : There are “sanctions of morality” which are reasons, motives or persuasives to altruistic conduct ; or more explicitly, which “include the pleasures which are the persuasives to conformity, as well as the pains which act as deterrents from disobedience to moral law.” These sanctions are either external or internal. The external sanctions, as stated by Bentham, are four, viz,—the physical, the political, the social, and the religious.

(i) The *physical sanction* is constituted by the physical pains which result from the disregard of natural laws, such as the laws of health, &c. For instance, it is a law of nature that we should satisfy the appetites moderately ; if we violate it by their over-indulgence, the violation is followed by pains. The idea of these pains deters the people from disobeying those laws, when they are prompted to do so.

(ii) The *political sanction* consists of those pains which follow upon the penalties inflicted by the authority, direct or indirect, of the sovereign in the case of violation of the laws of the state ; and also of the pleasures that arise from the rewards and honours bestowed

upon the benefactors of society. The idea of these pains deters the people from violating the laws which are nothing but the general statements of the social welfare ; and the idea of these pleasures prompts them to perform actions that are beneficial to society.

(iii) The *social sanction* includes those pleasures which arise from respect, gratitude, honour, &c. bestowed upon the individuals by the public entertaining favourable opinion about their beneficial deeds ; and also those pains of disgrace that are caused by the unfavourable public opinion about their misdeeds. The idea of these pleasures persuades them to perform those actions which are beneficial to society ; and the idea of these pains dissuades them from acting in the opposite way.

(iv) The *religious sanction* includes the fear of punishment and the hope of reward in another life. Although this sanction cannot constitute the motive of action to an ordinary hedonist whose ethics is naturalistic, and therefore denies the existence of a supernatural being as God, and also of an after-life, yet to the most people this sanction acts as a very powerful motive of action ; and exercises a very powerful influence on the moral education of the race and the individual.

So far as to the external sanctions. They are merely external pressures brought to bear upon the individual so as to compel him to sacrifice his own interests to the interests of society. Though in the beginning the individual feels coercion in obeying these external forces, in course of time he acquires a habit of obeying them

spontaneously, and thus, an identity or at least a community of interests being produced between him and society, he comes to "find his account" "in living conformably to the claims of the general happiness." But these external sanctions are not sufficient to produce that kind of identity or community of interests as is required by the case ; for if there is no natural altruistic impulse present in human nature to fight with and subdue the natural selfish impulse which is very powerful, no amount of merely external force will be of any avail. "The individual whose life was governed by such constraints would still be, in character and inner motive, if not in outward act, an egoist ; his end would still be egoistic, though it was accomplished by altruistic means." Hence the need for an internal sanction—a natural basis of altruistic conduct. To these external sanctions is, therefore, added, as a fifth, the *internal or moral sanction*.

(v) The *internal or moral sanction* consists, simply, of "the pleasures of a good conscience and the pains of remorse." The ultimate sanction, therefore, of all morality, apart from the external motives, is these subjective feelings—"the conscientious feelings of mankind." What is, then, meant by conscience—"the feeling of duty" ? Is it innate or implanted ? Mill's reply is : it is the "feeling for the happiness of mankind"—the feeling of "regard to the pleasures and pains of others." "But there is this basis of powerful natural sentiment ; and this it is which, when once the general happiness is recognised as the ethical standard, will constitute the

strength of the utilitarian morality. This firm foundation is that of the social feelings of mankind ; the desire to be in unity with our fellow creatures, which is already a powerful principle in human nature, and happily one of those which tend to become stronger, even without express inculcation, from the influences of advancing civilization." ( Utilitarianism, chap. III, p 46 ). Again, "This feeling in most individuals is much inferior in strength to their selfish feelings, is often wanting altogether. But to those who have it, it possesses all the characters of a natural feeling. It does not present itself to their minds as a superstition of education, or a law despotically imposed by the power of society, but as an attribute which it would not be well for them to be without. This conviction is the ultimate sanction of the greatest happiness morality." ( Ibid, p 50 ). This powerful internal sentiment, aided by the external sanctions is capable of producing that identity or community of interests between the individual and society, which is required by the utilitarian morality ; and even "when those sanctions are wanting, or act in an opposite direction, constitutes in itself a powerful internal binding force in proportion to the sensitiveness and thoughtfulness of the character." ( Ibid. pp. 50—51 ).

(b) **Qualitative differences in pleasures :—**

To this curious blending of Stoic and Epicurian elements Mill has added a third element, viz, the recognition of *qualitative differences* in pleasures, distinct from and overriding their quantitative differences. This is Mill's chief innovation. Hitherto the distinction of

quantity was regarded as the only distinction between one pleasure and another, or one pain and another. As against this view Mill maintains that "it is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact, that some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone." (Ibid, pp, 11-12).

Now, if it is asked, what is meant by difference of quality in pleasures ?; how can we estimate this difference ? Mill's answer is : "Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account. (Ibid, chap. II. p 12 ). Again, if it is asked, what pleasures are qualitatively superior to what other pleasures, Mill replies that "there is no known Epicurian theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments, a much

higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation."

Now, another question naturally suggests itself: why do those, who are equally acquainted with both these classes of pleasures, "give a most marked preference" to the former, and not to the latter? The answer is: man has a *sense of dignity* inherent in his nature by virtue of which he "would not consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs." (Ibid, p 12). Of course, this higher nature, this sense of dignity, demanding a higher kind of happiness for its satisfaction, carries with it a certain discontent. Still, "it is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides." (Ibid, p 14).

### **Critical Estimate of Utilitarianism :**

(i) In the first place, there are two confusions involved in the proof of the criterion. (a) "pleasure" is confounded with "pleasures." ( See, Examination of Psychological Hedonism – c ); and (b) "desirable" is confounded with "desired," or "capable of being desired,"

( See, Ethical Hedonism ). In the second place, it contains a fallacy, called in logic, "the Fallacy of Composition." The gist of the fallacy is that we first take a term *distributively* in the premisses, and then take it *collectively* in the conclusion. Take Mill's syllogism :

Happiness is a good.

My happiness is a good to me, yours to you,  
his to him, &c.

∴ My happiness + your happiness + his happiness  
+ &c. are a good to me + you + him + &c.

i. e. the general happiness is a good to the  
aggregate of all persons.

Here, both the happiness and person are taken distributively in the minor premiss, but collectively in the conclusion. Therefore the reasoning commits the Fallacy of Composition. About Mill's argument Prof. Muirhead has truly observed : "This is as though one were to argue ( to borrow Carlyle's famous comparison ), that because each pig desires for himself the greatest amount of a limited quantity of pigs' wash, each necessarily desires the greatest quantity for every other or for all."

Mill's argument contains another serious mistake. Neither the happinesses nor the persons are capable of being made into an aggregate. The aggregate of happinesses is no happiness, as the aggregate of persons is no person. For happiness, i. e. a pleasurable feeling, to be such, must be an actual state of feeling in some person's mind ; but the aggregate of happinesses is no actual state of feeling in any body's mind ;—it is a fiction of the imagination and has no objective reality. So that

the aggregate of happinesses of all persons is not a good to the aggregate of all persons. A good must be something real and so the person to whom it is a good. But in the present case both of them are fictions—non-entities.

(ii) We have found above how Mill's logical proof has completely broken down and failed to effect a reconciliation between egoism and altruism. He has tried, next, to fill up the logical gap by means of the doctrine of the "sanctions of morality." But this too has not fared better. With regard to this doctrine it may be observed, in words of Prof. Muirhead :—"to any but the hedonist the phrase "sanctions of morality" is suspiciously like a contradiction in terms. Conduct which issues from regard for these sanctions is *not* morality, if by that we mean conduct which is morally approved. It may conform to a certain type and be externally indistinguishable from good conduct, but it is not *good*. The man who is temperate because he desires the pleasures of temperance ( whether these be earthly or heavenly, physical or social ) is, as Plato pointed out, temperate by reason of a kind of intemperance. Similarly, the man who is courageous from fear of the pains which will be the consequence of cowardice is courageous by reason of a kind of cowardice. Appeals to the so-called moral sanction, i. e. to the pleasures of a good conscience ( or the pains of remorse ), as a motive to good conduct, appear, moreover, to involve an additional absurdity. The pleasure in question depends upon the approval of conscience, and this in turn depends on the



disinterestedness of the conduct, i. e. upon the exclusion of the idea of personal pleasure from the motive. To point therefore to the pleasure likely to result from such approval, as a reason for well-doing, is to suggest a motive which, if accepted, would render approval impossible." ( Elements of Ethics, pp. 103—104 ).

Apart from these difficulties involved in the doctrine there are some presuppositions upon which it is based.

(1) It supposes that man is merely a *feeling* being, so that all the principles of his life are supplied by his sensibility, and all the motives to his actions are either desires for pleasure or aversions to pain. There is a self-regarding impulse in him and also an other-regarding impulse; but both these impulses come from his sentient nature—they are sensuous impulses—they are sensibilities. So that man is entirely guided in his conduct by his sensibility, like the lower animals. Hence, as the sensibility of a beast can, to a considerable extent, be moulded and fashioned by subjecting it to external pressures, so by applying some external pressures as the sanctions to human nature it can be moulded and modified in such a wise as will make the antagonistic impulses ingrained in it harmonise with each other. This supposition is entirely wrong. We have found in the examination into the nature of Desire and its relation to Reason ( see, above, chap. II ) that man is both *rational* and *sentient*;—the human self is a rational self acting and realising itself in and through all the facts of his life. So that whatever external pressures are brought to bear upon it, it reacts upon them, modifying them consistently

with its own inherent nature and thereby making them the suitable means to its own development. In a sense there is nothing external to the self ; if there were anything *wholly* external to it, that could not, in any way, act upon and influence its nature. The possibility of action and reaction depends upon a community of nature ; and a community of nature is impossible where there is absolute externality or outsideness. So that the so-called external sanctions are not *really external*. They were discovered by the rational beings like men and accepted by them as the effective means or aids to the development of their moral life.

(2) Another presupposition, more or less involved in the preceding, is this : the human nature is supposed to be a mechanical and incoherent bundle of absolutely antagonistic impulses having no principle of unity or organisation behind them ; they are independent forces fighting with each other in the field of our consciousness for supremacy, and that one carries the laurels of victory which has by chance become the strongest. Such being the case, the antagonism between the selfish and the altruistic impulses will remain for ever irresolvable unless there is a higher principle to resolve it ; and there being no such higher principle in human nature, the function of such resolution must be left to some external forces as the sanctions. But it is forgotten that no amount of external force can harmonise the impulses which are by their nature absolutely antagonistic. Harmonisation implies affinity of nature ; and if there is no such affinity between the impulses, besides their

antagonism, nothing can harmonise them. But such harmonisation is a fact ; in all highly developed minds the antagonistic impulses are found to be harmonised. So that the principle of harmonisation must be sought elsewhere. The truth is : There is a universal principle in man working under the limitations of his sensibility, striving to regain its own perfection by overcoming these limitations, i. e. by subduing the selfish and developing the altruistic side of him, and thereby gradually harmonising and uniting them with each other. Such principle is Reason which binds man with man, nay, with all beings and all things in the world. Here—in the sphere of Reason • a man is a perfectly disinterested and benevolent spectator—does as he would be done by and loves others as himself. There—in the sphere of sensibility—he is self-seeking—and acts absolutely regardless of the pleasures and pains of others.

So far as to the logical and psychological defects of the doctrine. It has now become apparent that there is no possibility of any reasonable transition from egoism to altruism, as has been truly pointed out by Dr. Sidgwick. Mill has admitted it with some reluctance. He has plainly told us that the altruistic impulse—the “feeling for the happiness of mankind”—“in most individuals is much inferior in strength to their selfish feelings, and is often wanting altogether.” • If such be the case, it is practically admitted that man is guided in his conduct by only one principle, viz, his selfish impulse—that man is a pure egoist. Hence Mill’s internal sanction is a chimera, or at most an impotent force which can very

little help a man in his effort to convert himself into a disinterested hedonist. Mill's external sanctions are likewise powerless. For, if there is nothing in human nature to respond to their call,—to their demands—they will be as without any effect as the seeds sown on a stony ground. How can merely external forces change the selfish nature of man so completely as to make it wholly disinterested, without effacing it altogether? Bentham seemed to have fallen into a grievous mistake when he said, "I am a selfish man, as selfish as any man can be. But in me, somehow or other, so it happens, selfishness has taken the shape of benevolence." Such an absolute conversion, such an absolute obliteration, of human nature is inconceivable, if we accept the hedonist's conception of it.

Moreover, none of the so-called external sanctions touches the whole range of a man's conduct. There are conducts which always somehow or other slip through the meshes of these sanctions, and there are others which remain entirely outside the pale of them. There a man remains a pure egoist—there he is left free to seek his own pleasures without the least regard to the pleasures and pains of others. In conclusion, we must hold that the whole doctrine of the "sanctions of morality" is untenable and even absurd. (For an exhaustive treatment of this doctrine, see Prof. Sorley's *Ethics of Naturalism*, Part. I, Chap. III, and Dr. Sidgwick's *Methods of Ethics*, Bk. II, Chap. V.)

(iii) As we have found, Mill recognises, besides quantitative differences, qualitative differences among

pleasures. For instance, he regards the pleasures attached to the satisfaction of the higher or intellectual nature as qualitatively superior to those attached to the satisfaction of the lower or sensuous nature and subordinates the latter to the former. Pleasure, indeed, is still the end ; but the "higher" pleasure takes precedence over the "lower" irrespective of the amount of pleasant feeling that results." Or in other words, one pleasure is preferable to another, not because the former is "greater" ( i. e. more intense and durable ) and the latter "less," but because the former is "higher" ( i. e. more excellent ) and the latter "lower." Hence to determine the moral value of pleasure we must not refer only to its quantity, but also to its quality ; and when it is found that one pleasure has higher quality but less quantity, and another lower quality but greater quantity, the preference should be given to the former, and not to the latter—i. e. quality should always be allowed to override quantity. Again, Mill explains the qualitative superiority of the intellectual pleasures over the sensuous by basing it ultimately on the man's sense of dignity—on his superior nature which is nothing but what is constituted by his intellect, sentiments &c, and by virtue of which he is susceptible of higher pleasures. This admission practically amounts to the abandonment of the hedonistic standard ; because, it is no longer the quantity of pleasure, but its quality—its *excellence* or *worthiness*—that constitutes the true criterion of morality. But we may push the point still further and say that the ultimate standard of morality is not even the

excellence or worthiness of pleasures, but that which determines that excellence, and this being the higher nature of man we should thoroughly investigate it in order to find out the element that constitutes the true criterion.

Another difficulty arising out of Mill's admission is : How can we place pleasures in any precise order of desirability ? How can we ascertain that one pleasure is more desirable than another ? We have to take into account both quantity and quality. But quality is heterogeneous with quantity, and cannot, therefore, be reduced to it ; quality cannot be measured by, and estimated against quantity. If this be so, it is not always easy, or even possible, to determine which one of two pleasures is more desirable than the other. Suppose, one pleasure is not far inferior to another in quality, but far outweighs it in quantity, which one is preferable ? The former ? Then, you estimate the difference in quality against the difference in quantity ; and one may ask, what is the standard of your estimation ? The standard, if there is any, must be homogeneous with both quality and quantity, which is absurd. The latter ? The difficulties are exactly the same. Similar is the case with sums of pleasures. There is an additional difficulty here : Pleasures possessing different qualities are heterogeneous, and therefore, cannot be summed up ; for summation is possible only when the things summed up are homogeneous. Hence, if Mill's admission is accepted, there cannot be any scale of desirability as well as any sums of pleasures.

To get rid of the former class of difficulties Mill has resorted to the verdicts of the experts, i. e. those who are competently acquainted with both the pleasures. But the difficulties cannot really be resolved in this way ; because, to have any worth, the verdicts must be *reasonable*, i. e. based upon some true criterion ; and this criterion being, as suggested by Mill, nothing but the sense of dignity, the nature of this "dignity" should be carefully investigated in order to ascertain the precise nature of that criterion. So that the ultimate court of appeal is not the verdict, but some other thing upon which the verdict is based,—the consciousness of the dignity of man as man, i. e. as a rational being. So that we find that Mill's utilitarianism is a crude and incoherent jumbling of pure hedonism and rationalism. It contains an element of pure hedonism, because it is directly based upon that conception of human nature which regards it as absolutely *sensuous* and therefore, as capable of only one kind of desire, viz, desire for pleasure. It contains an element of rationalism in so far as it suggests that the ultimate criterion of right and wrong is not mere quantity of pleasure, but its excellence or worthiness which is conditioned by the higher or rational nature of man. The former view he inherited from his predecessors, the Epicureans, Hume, Bentham and James Mill, and the latter was suggested to him by his truly moral enthusiasm. But he failed to reconcile these two apparently antagonistic elements in his doctrine, but only laid them side by side.

(iv) But Mill's inconsistency is no evidence against

Hedonism itself. The distinction of pleasure in quality has not been adopted by later utilitarians—e. g. Dr. Sidgwick and Dr. Bain. The decided opinion of the latter is that “he ( Mill ) ought to have resolved all the so-called nobler or higher pleasures into the single circumstance of including, with the agent’s pleasure, the pleasure of others.” ( Bain’s J. S. Mill : a criticism, p. 113 ). It is therefore necessary to consider whether there are really qualitative differences among pleasures ; and if we can show that there are really such differences, it will positively go against the theory of Hedonism. For that purpose we should consider the following points :—

We have already found ( see, above, chap. II ), that pleasure is invariably the consequence of the satisfaction, either of an impulse, or of a desire. The former kind of satisfaction gives pleasure which is simple, immediate and purely sensuous. This kind of agreeable feeling may be called *sensuous pleasure*, or simply pleasure ; it simply appeals to the sensibility of man which he shares with the lower animals, and therefore may also be called *animal pleasure*. But the satisfaction of a desire gives pleasure which is more complex, more reflective or intellectual, because the desire is formed by the activity of reason upon an animal impulse, and in its satisfaction the self thinks itself as more or less realised, as having more or less attained its end. Desire being thus distinctively human, the pleasure arising from its satisfaction is likewise so. So that this kind of agree-



able feeling should be put under a different category, and has been described by some as *happiness*. But desires are not all alike. They belong to different "universes," i. e. different stages of character which determine their nature. These differences among desires are qualitative like those among the "universes." Just as there are qualitative distinctions among desires, so there are qualitative distinctions among the pleasures arising out of their satisfactions, i. e. the attainments of the desired objects. Thus, the feelings attending the satisfaction of the desires for food, money, fame, &c. are very different from those following upon the satisfaction of the desires for knowledge, morality and piety ; the feelings of animal enjoyment are very different from those that arise from the poetic and religious emotions ; the feelings resulting from the satisfaction of the selfish desires are widely different from those that arise from the due discharge of duties. It is true that the satisfactions of all desires noble and base are self-satisfactions—that all happiness is the feeling of self-realizedness. But, yet, in all instances, exactly the same self is not realised ; what are really realised in them are the passing phases of the self going through a process of development. The feelings attending the satisfaction of the desires belonging to the higher phases of the self have been called by Carlyle *blessedness* rather than happiness. ( see, Sartor Resartus, Bk II, chap. ix ) ; and the feelings flowing from the satisfaction of the highest phase of the self—the phase in which the self thinks itself wholly reconciled and united to the Infinite

Self, have been called "bliss" (*ānandam*) by the Hindu sages.

Thus we find that *pleasure*, or more properly the *sensuous or animal pleasure* belongs to the *sentient self* and *happiness*, in its different forms, to the *total self*—the rational self realising itself in and through the sentient self. It is now evident that pleasures differ from one another in quality. But, still, it may be contended that pleasures *quā* pleasures have no qualitative differences; they all are alike in quality; only the objects which produce them have such differences. So that it is necessary to show that *pleasures are inseparable from their objects*.

Pleasure as a state of feeling is merely an element—a part—in a total state of consciousness present in the mind at a particular time. Pleasure cannot, therefore, exist by itself as a separate entity. It is related to the intellectual and volitional elements which also form part of that total state. As being an effect, pleasure has conditions without which it cannot exist, and when separated from these conditions, it becomes an abstraction—a non-entity. As Prof. Green has truly observed: "pleasure as feeling, in distinction from its conditions which are not feelings, cannot be conceived." This is an important psychological truth. What then, are the contents of that total state of which the felt pleasure is an element? The *idea* of the desired object, the attainment of which gives the pleasure, is one of the important contents, the other contents being those ideas that are revoked by the idea of the object through associa

tion, as well as those which were passing through our mind before the object presented itself to our consciousness. Thus the total object before our consciousness is this complex of thoughts and images. If this be so, it is evident that pleasure forms only a part, and even a subordinate, though a very intense and vivid, part of the whole state. It has a significance in so far as it is a part, i. e. related to the whole, and loses that significance altogether when separated from that whole. The nature of the whole state determines the nature of the pleasure ; change the nature of the former, the nature of the latter is also changed. So that a pleasure forming part of a particular complex mental state has a *unique* character which is not possessed by any other complex mental state. Hence pleasure and the object giving rise to that pleasure, the idea of which forms the most important element of a total mental state, are *inseparable*.

The above considerations conclusively prove that pleasures really *differ in quality* ; and this conclusion subverts the theory of Hedonism.

(v) We have already found that if we once admit any qualitative difference among pleasures, any calculus of them becomes impossible, and the phrases—"a sum of pleasures," "the greatest pleasure or happiness," "the greatest amount of happiness," &c. become meaningless, unless by the first is meant "a series of pleasures" and by the second and the third "the most intense pleasure felt at a particular time". There is another difficulty involved in the hedonistic doctrine. "If then

desire is only for pleasures, i. e. for an enjoyment or feeling of pleasure, we are simply the victim of words when we talk of desire for a sum of pleasures, much more when we take the greatest imaginable sum to be the most desired. We are confusing a sum of pleasures as connected and combined in thought, with a sum of pleasures as felt or enjoyed, which is a non-entity." ( Prof. Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 236 ). We are apt to think that a sum of pleasures is pleasure ; but it is not really so. A sum of pleasures, if it has any meaning at all, means "a contemplated series of pleasures". But a desire for such a series is not a desire for pleasure, i. e. an actual state of feeling; there is no such thing as a feeling of a series of pleasures. So that a desire for a contemplated series of pleasures is a desire for something else than pleasure, which contradicts the very foundation of the hedonistic doctrine that pleasure is the only desirable thing. Again, if we mean by "the greatest sum of pleasures" the most intense present pleasure, then we abandon the utilitarian stand-point and fall back upon that of the egoistic Hedonist. Besides this, there is an ambiguity in the phrase—"the greatest ( sum of ) happiness of the greatest number". It is evident that a desire for such a sum is not a desire for pleasure on the part of the person who entertains it, but a desire for producing pleasures in others. Hence, the ultimate good for man is not pleasure, but something else, which is equivalent to abandoning the hedonistic stand-point.

Of course it is not denied that the common people

are apt to think that what they ordinarily desire is a sum of pleasures, or more precisely, the greatest sum of pleasures ; and even many thoughtful writers adhere to "the notion that the deliberate desire for what is good on the whole is equivalent to desire for a greatest possible quantity of pleasure." But on closer examination we find that what they really desire is a *continuous state of happiness or enjoyable existence*. But a continuous state of happiness is not constituted by a sum or series of pleasures. In fact, a sum or series of pleasures is not enjoyable as *a sum or series* at all ; we can enjoy only a specific feeling of pleasure at a time, and before we come to enjoy the following feeling the preceding one passes away. "In truth a man's reference to his own true happiness is a reference to the objects which chiefly interest him, and has its controlling power on that account. More strictly, it is a reference to an ideal state of well-being, a state in which he shall be satisfied ; but the objects of the man's chief interests supply the filling of that ideal state. The idea of such a state, indeed, neither is, nor is conceived as being, fully realisable by us. The objects of which we contemplate the attainment as necessary to its fulfilment are not contemplated as completely fulfilling it. In our contemplation of them as truly good the forecast of an indefinable Better is always present. But in any consideration of true happiness which is other than the vague discontent of the sated or baffled voluptuary, the consciousness of objects which we are seeking to realise, of ideas to which we are trying to give effect, holds the

first place. Just because we wish for the attainment of such objects, we are unhappy till we attain them ; and thus, owing to the difficulty of mentally articulating them, we are apt to lump them in our thoughts as happiness. But they do not consist in pleasures, The ideas of them, which we are seeking to realise, are not ideas of pleasures. \* \* . In short, it is the realisation of those objects in which we are mainly interested, not the succession of enjoyments which we shall experience in realising them, that forms the definite content of our idea of true happiness, so far as it has such content at all." ( Ibid, p. 244 ).

From the above considerations we conclude that Utilitarianism as propounded by Hume, Bentham and Mill is full of logical inconsistencies and psychological defects, and has therefore completely broken down as an unsound ethical doctrine.

**(2) Rational Utilitarianism :—**Being dissatisfied with Mill's reasonings to effect a reconciliation between egoism and altruism – between the interests of the individual and those of all human beings, or even of all sentient creatures, Dr. Sidgwick has tried to reconcile them in another way. He supposes that the claim of Universalistic Hedonism can be proved exactly in the same way as that of Egoistic Hedonism. His standpoint is also hedonistic ; he also maintains that the ultimate good of man is pleasure, and that the pleasure of the individual is as legitimate as that of all human beings ; but he differs from Mill and other hedonists in that the method to bridge over the gap is not psycho-

logical, as held by them, but *logical*. The appeal to mere sensibility—to the merely natural feeling of sympathy—“the feeling of regard to the pleasures and pains of others,” is ineffective, because the two opposing impulses of human nature will never come to any terms if they are left to themselves, and therefore the problem of reconciliation will remain for ever insoluble. The proper method is to appeal to Reason—the higher principle in man in order to see where lies the real reconciliation. Consequently he proceeds to prove the rationality of Utilitarianism ; and for this reason his theory is called *Rational Utilitarianism*.

His arguments are the following : “If the Egoist strictly confines himself to stating his conviction that he ought to take his own happiness or pleasure as his ultimate end, there seems no opening for any line of reasoning to lead him to Universalistic Hedonism as a first principle ; it cannot be proved that the difference between his own happiness and another’s happiness is not *for him* all-important. In this case all that the utilitarian can do is to effect as far as possible a reconciliation between the two principles, by expounding to the Egoist the *sanctions* of rules deduced from the universalistic principle—i. e. the pleasures and pains that may be expected to accrue to the Egoist himself from their observation and violation respectively. It is obvious that such an exposition has no tendency to make him accept the greatest happiness of the greatest number as his ultimate end ; but only as a means to the end of his own happiness. It is therefore totally different from a

*proof* of Universalistic Hedonism. When, however, the Egoist puts forward, implicitly or explicitly, the proposition that his happiness or pleasure is Good, not only *for him* but from the point of view of the *Universe*,—as (e. g.) by saying that nature designed him to seek his own happiness,—it then becomes relevant to point out to him that *his* happiness cannot be a more important part of Good, taken universally, than the equal happiness of any other person. And thus, starting with his own principle, he may be brought to accept Universal happiness or pleasure as that which is absolutely and without qualification Good or Desirable : as an end, therefore, to which the action of a reasonable agent as such ought to be directed." (Methods of Ethics, pp. 420—21 ).

After proving the rationality of Utilitarianism in this way he proceeds to expound those *regulative* principles which form the bases of the *distribution of good* both individual and universal. (1) In so far as the distribution of the individual good is concerned, it is necessary to make appeal to a rational principle. The appeal to the mere sensibility is useless, or even misleading. The sensibility will guide us to the enjoyment of the pleasures of the moments. It is a blind principle—it has no foresight—it is unable to look forward through the present into the future—it does not even know the future—it is entirely confined to the satisfaction of the moment. So that if we are guided by it, we shall rest content with the momentary pleasures—we shall be pure hedonists like the Charvakists and the Cyrenaics.



"Eat, drink and be merry" will be the sole motto of our life. In short, we shall live a life no better than that of a beast. But our reason tells us that our good is not the pleasure of the moment, but of our total life ;—it is "a good on the whole". To the eyes of reason a particular moment has no more value than any other moment ; we ought to have "impartial concern for all parts of our conscious life" ; "Hereafter *as such* is to be regarded neither less nor more than now." "It is not, of course, meant that the good of the present may not reasonably be preferred to that of the future on account of its greater certainty : or, again a week ten years hence may not be more important to us than a week now through an increase in our means or capacities of happiness. All that the principle affirms is that the mere difference of priority and posteriority in time is not a reasonable ground for having more regard to the consciousness of one moment than to that of another. The form in which it practically presents itself to most men is "that a smaller present good is not to be preferred to a greater future good. \* \* \* The commonest view of the principle would no doubt be that the present *pleasure* or *happiness* is reasonably to be foregone with the view of obtaining greater pleasure or happiness hereafter." ( Ibid. p. 381 ). This rational principle which bids us be impartial with regard to the selection of moments in our life and thus guides us in the distribution of our own individual good is *Prudence* or *Rational self-love*.

(2) So far we have confined ourselves to the consi-

deration of the "good on the whole" of a single individual only. But the individual good is not the only good which we ought to desire ; there is another kind of good, viz, the Universal good including the goods of all individual human—or sentient—existences, which also our reason declares desirable. "And here again, just as in the former case, by considering the relation of the integrant parts to the whole and to each other, we may obtain the self-evident principle that the good of any one individual is of no more importance, from the point of view of the Universe, than the good of any other ; unless, that is, there are special ground for believing that more good is likely to be realized in the one case than in the other. And as rational beings we are bound to aim at good generally—so far as we recognise it as attainable by our efforts—not merely at this or that part of it ; we can only evade the conviction of this obligation by denying that there is any such universal good." ( Ibid, p. 382 ). Thus we find that our own individual good and the universal good are what we ought to desire at the same time and in the same sense. The true way to the reconciliation of egoism with altruism—of the individual good with the universal good—is here also not psychological, but logical. The mere sensibility cannot bridge over the gulf lying between the antagonistic impulses of our nature. It is reason which fills up the gap and bids us be impartial with regard to the distribution, not only of our individual good but also of the universal good. As in the former reference all the moments of our life should be

regarded as equally valuable, so in the latter all the individuals ought to be considered as equally important. This rational principle that "one is morally bound to regard the good of any other individual as much as one's own" which guides us in the distribution of pleasure between ourselves and others is "the abstract principle of the duty of *Benevolence*". Prudence and Benevolence are thus the two rational principles which guide the processes of distribution of the individual and universal good respectively.

(3) But a closer examination into the nature of Prudence and Benevolence shows that they are not sufficient by themselves to guide us in the *precise* distribution of happiness. These principles declare that all the competing moments of our life, or all the competing individuals have absolutely equal importance, and so absolutely equal claim to happiness. But this is not true. On closer scrutiny some moments or some individuals are found to be more important and consequently to have more claim than others, by reason of their larger or peculiar capacity for pleasure. The strict "impartiality" demanded by Prudence and Benevolence should be enlightened and modified by the sense of higher *Justice* which teaches us that the true "impartiality" does not exclude "inequality" but includes it, and consists in satisfying the demands of the competitors in strict accordance with their merits. The impartiality demanded by Justice is that impartiality which we should show when the competitors have equal merits ; and which does not induce us to ignore the greater merit in

favour of the less. So that to attain the "greatest happiness" we must eschew "the strict literal impartiality" required by the principles of Prudence and Benevolence, and guide ourselves by the enlightened impartiality of Justice. "Instead of depressing the maximum to a rigid average, by distributing the "greatest happiness" equally among the "greatest number" of moments or of individuals, the principle of Justice directs us to aim at the greatest total happiness, or the greatest happiness "on the whole", whether in our own experience or in that of the race." ( Prof. J. Seth's "A study of Ethical Principles", pp. 114—15 ).

In this way, Dr. Sidgwick thinks, he has been able to subvert Egoistic Hedonism in its pure form, and substitute Universalistic Hedonism in its place. He has also been led to abandon "the doctrine of Psychological Hedonism and to recognise the existence of "disinterested" or "extra-regarding impulse to action, not directed towards the agent's pleasure." In fact as regards the Psychological basis of ethics he agrees much more with Butler than Mill. He has thus tried to reconcile Hedonism and Intuitionism, i. e. he has tried to found Hedonism on an *intuitional* basis. In this connection he expresses himself thus : "And this led me to reconsider my relation to Intuitional Ethics. The strength and vehemence of Butler's condemnation of pure Utilitarianism, in so cautious a writer, naturally impressed me much. And I had myself become, as I had to admit to myself, an Intuitionist to a certain extent. For the supreme rule of aiming at the general

happiness, as I had come to see, must rest on a fundamental moral intuition, if I was to recognise it as binding at all. And in reading the writings of the earlier English Intuitionists, More and Clarke, I found the axiom I required for my Utilitarianism [ that a rational agent is bound to aim at Universal Happiness ], in one form or another, holding a prominent place."

**Criticism** :—(1) Dr. Sidgwick maintains that "the rationality of self-regard is as undeniable as the rationality of self-sacrifice"—egoism is as reasonable as altruism—Rational Self-love and Benevolence are two forms of the same principle, viz, reason. But it is also undeniable that self-regard is not always coincident with self-sacrifice ; there are numerous instances of conflict between the egoistic and altruistic impulses. Now, the most important question is : is such conflict *apparent* or *real* ? Is there any real point of agreement between these two impulses, i. e. are ~~these~~ these two impulses really two forms of the same principle, or are they really antagonistic, though found to be coincident in some instances ? Dr. Sidgwick seems to be vacillating in his reply. But his decided opinion seems to be that our *primary* good is our own happiness, and only in a *secondary* way we come to know that the happiness of others is also our good ; that as this secondary good cannot be more desirable than the primary, we are bound still to regard our own happiness as the supreme good. Hence there is, according to him, a certain contradiction in the final recommendations of reason ;—it commands us, in the first place, to seek our own greatest

happiness, and in the second place, the greatest happiness of others. In reply to the question, is this contradiction apparent or real ? Dr. Sidgwick observes that "practical reason would still impel us decisively to the performance of duty in the more ordinary cases in which what is recognised as duty is in harmony with self-interest properly understood. But in rarer cases of a recognised conflict between self-interest and duty, practical reason, being divided against itself, would cease to be a motive on either side ; the conflict would have to be decided by the comparative predominance of one or other of two groups of non-rational impulses." ( Methods of ethics, p. 508 ). Thus we find that the contradictory assertions of reason—"the Dualism of Practical reason" as called by him—are left unexplained and therefore unreconciled.

(2) With reference to the conception of the supreme good his theory is a crude and curious blending of Hedonism and Rationalism. The ultimate nature of good, he holds, is determined by sensibility, because pleasure or happiness satisfies only the sensible side of human nature, the enjoyment of pleasure being possible without any need of reason to constitute it ; while the desirableness of good is proved by appealing to the other side, viz, reason. Thus reason is held to declare the desirableness of a good which is *non-rational*. Now the question is : can such non-rational good satisfy reason ? Is it at all possible for reason to declare something to be good for human nature which is no good for itself ? To this question his answer seems ambiguous.

He holds indeed that pleasure means "desirable consciousness". But so long as we remember the distinction between the desired and the desirable, "we cannot suppose that the rational soul, in presenting a *desirable* consciousness on its own part as involved in ultimate good, presents it simply as so much pleasure. The very fact that it asks for a consciousness which is desirable or *should be* desired, shows that it cannot satisfy itself with that which every one *naturally desires*, but of which for that reason no one can think as what he *should desire*. The presentation of an object as one that *should be* desired implies that it is not desired *as a pleasure* by the person to whom it so presents itself. A man may speak significantly of another person's pleasure as desirable, but not of his own. The desirableness of *a pleasure* must always express its relation to some one else than the person desiring the enjoyment of the pleasure. Thus to suppose a consciousness to be at once desired as a pleasure and contemplated as desirable by the same person, is a contradiction. \* \* \* When we are told, therefore, that ultimate good is desirable consciousness or pleasure for all sentient beings, we reply that though it may be sought as pleasure for all sentient beings, it cannot be sought *as his own pleasure* by one who also contemplates it as the consciousness desirable for himself. The description of ultimate good as pleasure, and the description of it as desirable (not desired) consciousness, are incompatible descriptions, so far as they are descriptions of a state of being which the rational soul seeks as its own." (Green's Prolegomena to Ethics,

pp 413—14 ). We therefore conclude that pleasure or happiness cannot be regarded as the ultimate good for human nature as a whole ; it may form a part, not the whole of it.

(3) Dr. Sidgwick's real difficulty arises out of his false conception about the true nature of the self. He has emphasized the distinction between its two sides—sensibility and reason—but has overlooked or ignored their relation. Human nature is not a merely mechanical bundle of distinct and antagonistic elements. There is unity back of the distinction. The real and concrete self is neither merely sentient, nor merely rational—it is a rational principle that uses sensibility as the means through which it maintains and realises itself, and thereby marches towards a goal—a state of its own perfection. So that the supreme good is not *simply* pleasure, but a state of perfection of human nature in which reason and sensibility are finally and for ever reconciled, and which, therefore, does not exclude pleasure, but includes it ;—it is a state which is perfectly rational and at the same time conspicuous by the presence of everlasting joy and contentment. ( See chapters II and VI of this Book ).



## CHAPTER V.

### Standard as Perfection.

#### I. UTILITARIANISM ( New form )

##### (1) **Application of Evolution to Morals** ;—

Although the idea of Evolution was often applied to the moral life by the ancient writers, yet it has been given a prominent place only in recent times. It was applied by Hegel and Comte to explain the moral and religious life, the origin of government and the world ; and afterwards by Lamarck, Darwin and others to the origin of species ; and in the most recent times by H. Spencer, Sir L. Stephen and others to the origin of society, government, moral ideas and institutions &c. But when we apply this idea to morals, we should keep two points quite apart : (1) We may study our moral life from the point of view of its *history* ; we may describe the successive stages through which the moral life of individuals and nations had passed in the course of years or ages—the process by which our moral ideas and institutions had grown and developed in course of time, and thus find out the direction of its evolution—the end towards which the whole process is marching : Or (2) we may study it from the point of view of its *ideal* ; we may consider the moral life itself, in its very nature, a process of development which involves an ideal in the realisation and attainment of which its full significance consists ;—our actual moral life may fall far short of the ideal, yet its true moral worth consists in our effort to gradually attain it and is measured by the degree of our success in attaining it. The former is the function

of *Moral History*, or the History of moral ideas and institutions, the latter is the function of *Ethics* or the Theory of morality. The former inquiry is *scientific*, the latter is *philosophical*. *The Evolutionary theory of Ethics, therefore, means that there is a standard or ideal of character, and that the meaning of the moral life consists in the gradual approximation to that type*

But we can take two views of, or rather two distinct ways of interpreting, the process of evolution. Every process of evolution has a beginning, intermediate stages, and an end. The developing thing starts from a certain point, passes through successive stages of higher and higher complexity towards a goal. But generally what we actually perceive is neither the beginning nor the end, but the intervening stages—the actual process. Take, for example, the evolution of the animal species. Here we are unable to discover the absolute beginning of the species—the lowest animal form ; nor are we able to know the goal—the highest form of animal life. What we actually know are the intermediate forms of animal life. The case is exactly the same with our moral life. We do not know the lowest form of the moral life, for it is hidden in obscurity ; nor do we know, or form a clear conception of a perfectly developed moral life. We only know the process—the intermediate stages of the moral life. But, yet, to explain this process we must go either to the beginning, or to the end or goal. Hence there are two possible ways of interpreting the moral life, if we adopt the theory of development. *We may explain it by reference to its beginning, or to its end.*

H. Spencer and others, who have applied the idea of evolution to morals, have tried to explain the process *by reference to the beginning*. This seems to be the most natural method. For all sciences explain phenomena by reference to their causes and modes of operation. If we want to explain the moral phenomena *scientifically*, we must explain them by their causes ; and these causes *ultimately* are to be sought in the needs of savages, or even in the struggles of the lower animals. Only in this way we can trace the causes that have been in operation throughout the development of the moral life. This method, therefore, does not inquire into the end, because it holds that such an inquiry would be useless and fruitless in most cases.

(2) **Modifications introduced into Hedonism by the application of Evolution :—**

It is very important to notice the points of divergence between the older and the newer form of Hedonism. There is essentially no difference with regard to the nature of the ultimate good or end of life. This is, in both cases, the same, viz, pleasure or happiness. The real points of divergence exist with regard to the *presuppositions* and the *method* of the two forms.

(a) The older form rests upon an erroneous conception of human nature, both in respect of its internal constitution, and its external relations. The *presuppositions* which it makes regarding that are :—

(i) It maintains that society is a mechanical aggregate of individuals like inorganic matter which is a mechanical aggregate of molecules or atoms, thus

conceiving the relation between the individual and society to be merely mechanical and external. ( see, above, Chap. III of this Book,—Hobbesism ).

(ii) Like the individuals that constitute society, the pleasures or happinesses are conceived of as *homogeneous but distinct units*. Like fixed and equal individuals, we have fixed and equal "lots" of pleasure or happiness. "We must conceive of happiness" ( according to this theory ) "as a kind of emotional currency, capable of being calculated and distributed in "lots" which have a certain definite value independently of any special taste of the individual. \* \* \* Pains and pleasures can be handed about like pieces of money, and we have simply to calculate how to gain a maximum of pleasure and a minimum of pain." ( Sir Leslie Stephen, *Science of Ethics*, p. 360 ).

(iii) The individuals that constitute society, like the atoms that constitute inorganic matter, are regarded *relatively constant*, and likewise is the society looked at as on the whole *static* or *unchangeable*. It is true that certain variations mostly due to the circumstances of birth and education they are found to undergo ; but these variations being accidental, they remain relatively constant on the aggregate.

(iv) The main features of pleasure or happiness which is the ultimate end of the moral life are regarded as *fixed*, inasmuch as they are held to be relative only to the capacities of individuals in so far as they are static or unchangeable. In other words, as the constitution of human nature is regarded by this theory as

essentially fixed and unchangeable, so pleasure or happiness, which is relative to that constitution is regarded equally fixed and unchangeable at least in its main features.

These presuppositions of the older theory are held by the newer to be erroneous. For the "atomic theory" of human nature and happiness the doctrine of Evolution has substituted the organic. The true conception of society, according to the latter, is that it is an *organism*, and that individuals are essential and integral members of it. "Man is a social being". Human nature is inconceivable when divested of its social relations—it becomes an abstraction—a non-entity—when divorced from society. Hence the relation between the individual and society is not *merely* mechanical and external but *organic* and *internal*. ( See, "the relation of Individual to Society" in the sequel ).

Again, this organic conception of society involves the conception that it is not unchangeable like a piece of inorganic matter ; but like all other organisms it grows and develops by its reaction upon its environment, and thus passes through stages of greater and greater complexity, differentiating itself gradually into very various subdivisions or groups and at the same time integrating them all and all the constituent members thereof with one another by a closer and closer bond of connection. The most important result of the social evolution is that, like the different parts of the physical organism, the different individuals become more and more dependent upon one another, so that the nature

of each is wholly determined by his relations to others. "Society, in fact," says Sir Leslie Stephen, "is a structure which by its nature implies a certain fixity in the distribution and relations of classes. Each man is found with a certain part of the joint framework, which is made of flesh and blood instead of bricks or timber, but which is not the less truly a persistent structure." ( Science of Ethics, p. 31 ).

These conceptions about the nature of society and its relation to individuals considerably modify the theory of pleasure. Pleasure is dependent, not upon the constitution of a man regarded as a distinct and isolated individual, but upon the "organic balance" of his instincts or impulses that is determined by his relations to society. "Pleasure is not a separate thing, independently of his special organisation. \* \* \* Each instinct, for example, must have its turn, and their respective provinces must be determined by the general organic balance. We may undoubtedly point out that certain modes of conduct produce pain, and others pleasure ; and this is a *prima-facie* reason at least, for avoiding one and accepting the other. But, again, some pains imply a remedial process, while others imply disease ; and the conduct which increases them may therefore either be wise or foolish in the highest degree." ( Science of Ethics, P. 395 ).

In a similar way, the fact of evolution of society necessitates a modification of our conception of happiness. "As long as we are content to look upon human nature as consisting of unchanging modes of activity, and

as having constant susceptibilities for pleasure and pain, we may adopt the increase of pleasure and diminution of pain as our aim even in conduct which has a distant end in view. But the case is altered when we take account of the fact that man's actions and sensibilities are subject to indefinite modification. Pleasure, as we have seen, is dependent upon the state of conscious apprehension and activity at any moment. By itself it is not a possible object of pursuit. We always aim at some end which can be expressed in objective terms : although we may aim at certain objects rather than others simply on account of their pleasurable accompaniment. It may happen, however, that a kind of object or action which is pleasurable at one time may become painful at another time, and that what is now painful may cease to be so and may become pleasant. In this case our action, if it aims at pleasure, would have to be entirely changed, our practical ethics would need to be revised and reversed. And, although no sudden alteration of this kind ever takes place, the theory of evolution shows that a gradual modification of the sort does go on." ( Prof. Sorley, *Ethics of Naturalism*, P. 233 ).

The *method* of the old Utilitarianism is equally objectionable. It is *empirical*, Morality is mere generalisation from collection of facts as regards the best means of producing the greatest surplus of pleasure. the evolutionists, on the other hand, maintain that morality is the essential condition of the health and efficiency of the social organism. The moral rules are nothing but

general statements of the most important properties of the social organism—those properties which maintain its health. Hence the moral rules are justified, not on the ground that they are found by experience to be conducive to the greatest happiness to ourselves and others, but on the ground that they are necessary to the health and efficiency of the organism. This is the real difference between the utilitarian and the evolutionist standard. The former is the *happiness*, the latter is the *health*, of society.

But ultimately these two ends are coincident. The health of society is valuable, because it is the condition of its happiness. So that as far as the ultimate end is concerned, there is no difference between evolutionary ethics and Hedonism. The difference exists with regard to the *proximate end*. "The end is happiness, but that is best attained by keeping it in the background, and fixing attention upon the conditions." Thus the difference lies in the method of reaching the end. "The view for which I contend," says H. Spencer, "is that Morality properly so-called—the science of right conduct—has for its object to determine *how* and *why* certain modes of conduct are detrimental, and certain other modes beneficial. These good and bad results cannot be accidental, but must be necessary consequences of the constitution of things ; and I conceive it to be the business of Moral Science to deduce, from the laws of life and the conditions of existence, what kinds of action necessarily tend to produce happiness, and what kinds to produce unhappiness. Having done this, its deduc-



tions are to be recognized as laws of conduct ; and are to be conformed to irrespective of a direct estimation of happiness or misery." ( Principles of Ethics, p. 57 ). Thus we find that the method of the Evolutionary Ethics is *deductive*, while that of Hedonism is *inductive* or *empirical*.

### (3) Explanation by beginning :

#### H. Spencer's Ethical views :

(i) **His theory of the moral Ideal** :—As we have observed, H. Spencer explains the moral life by reference to its beginning. To determine the nature of this beginning he goes back to the life of the lower animals. Conduct which forms the object of ethical judgment is, according to him, a part of an organic whole—the universal conduct. "A complete comprehension of conduct is not to be obtained by contemplating the conduct of human beings only ; we have to regard this as a part of universal conduct—conduct as exhibited by all living creatures. \* \* \* And as in other cases, so in this case, we must interpret the more developed by the less developed. Just as, fully to understand the part of conduct which ethics deals with, we must study human conduct as a whole ; so, fully to understand human conduct as a whole, we must study it as a part of that larger whole constituted by the conduct of animate beings in general." ( Principles of Ethics, pp. 6-7 ) Conduct may be defined as "acts adjusted to ends, or else—the adjustment of acts to ends." Conduct as an organic whole evolves like any other organic

whole ; and its evolution consists in the growing complexity and completeness of this adjustment. The moral conduct—the conduct that ethics has for its subject-matter—is “that form which universal conduct assumes during the last stages of its evolution—i. e. the moral conduct is the most developed form of conduct in general. All conduct is good or bad. We apply the epithet “good” or “bad” to acts, “according as the adjustments of acts to ends are, or are not, efficient ;”—“acts are called good or bad, according as they are well or ill adjusted to ends.” Again, “the conduct to which we apply the name good, is the relatively more evolved conduct ; and that bad is the name we apply to conduct which is relatively less evolved.” But as the more evolved conduct tends more, and the less evolved conduct tends less, towards self-preservation, “we regard as good the conduct furthering self-preservation, and as bad the conduct tending to self-destruction.” The conduct that is *morally* good being the most evolved conduct and the morally bad conduct being opposite to it, it is evident that the former is most conducive, and the latter least conducive, or rather most detrimental, to the preservation of life. Hence the ultimate goal to the natural evolution of conduct is the same as the ideally moral conduct,—i. e. *the perfectly developed conduct is at the same time ideally moral.* The ultimate end of conduct, therefore, is life—its preservation and development. But as the “evolution becomes the highest possible when the conduct simultaneously achieves the greatest totality of life in self, in offspring and in fellow men ; so here we

see that the conduct called good rises to the conduct conceived as best, when it fulfils all three classes of ends at the same time." Life consists in "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations,"—i. e. in the constant effort of an organism to adapt itself to its environment. Good conduct gives pleasure, because it brings the organism into harmony with its environment ; and bad conduct gives pain, because it hinders such adjustment. But no actual conduct is perfectly good or bad, and therefore perfectly pleasurable or painful ; because no actual conduct is capable of producing perfect harmony or disharmony between the organism and the environment. Hence an actual conduct can be only *relatively* good or bad, pleasurable or painful. That conduct is relatively good which produces a surplus of pleasure over pain ; and that conduct is relatively bad which produces a surplus of pain over pleasure. Only the ideally moral conduct is capable of producing pure or unmixed pleasure. Now, the most important question is : why do we regard the preservation of life both individual and social as the supreme end or ideal of conduct ? In reply to this question, H. Spencer maintains that life is worth living—life is on the whole pleasurable. "This judging as good, conduct which conduces to life in each and all, we found to involve the assumption that animate existence is *desirable*. By the pessimist, conduct which subserves life cannot consistently be called good : to call it good implies some form of optimism. We saw, however, that pessimists and optimists both start with the postulate that

life is a blessing or a curse, according as the average consciousness accompanying it is pleasurable or painful. And since avowed or implied pessimists, and optimists of one or other shade, taken together constitute all men, it results that this postulate is universally accepted. Whence it follows that if we call good the conduct conducive to life, we can do so only with the implication that it is conducive to a surplus of pleasures over pains." (Ibid, p. 45). Hence, in fact, the *supreme end* of life is happiness, while the *proximate end* is the preservation and development of life. "So that no school can avoid taking for the ultimate moral aim a desirable state of feeling called by whatever name—gratification, enjoyment, happiness. Pleasure somewhere, at sometime, to some being or beings, is an inexpugnable element of the conception. It is as much a necessary form of moral intuitions as space is a necessary form of intellectual intuition." (Ibid, p. 16). But to best attain this ultimate end it should be kept in the background, and attention should be fixed on the condition—the proximate end, i. e. the preservation and development of life, or more appropriately the adjustment between the organism and the environment, in the more and more perfect form of which such preservation and development consist.

(ii) **The genesis of the moral consciousness :—**"The essential trait in the moral consciousness is the control of some feeling or feelings by some other feeling or feelings", and it is found by studying the nature of the evolution of conduct sub-human and

human, that "for the better preservation of life the primitive, simple, presentative feelings must be controlled by the later-evolved, compound and representative feelings". But this control is not *natural*. To make this possible, some external forces or pressures must be brought to bear upon the human nature. These external pressures are called by H. Spencer the *political*, the *religious*, and the *social* controls. By these "controls" or external pressures the former class of feelings may be made subordinate to the latter. He mentions another control, which is internal and called by him the *moral* control. This moral control should be carefully distinguished from the preceding, though it is often confounded with them. The external controls "do not constitute the moral control, but are only preparatory to it—are controls within which the moral control evolves." "The restraints properly distinguished as moral, are unlike these restraints out of which they evolve, and with which they are long confounded ; and differ in this—they refer not to the extrinsic effects of actions but to their intrinsic effects. The truly moral deterrent from murder, is not constituted by a representation of hanging as a consequence, or by a representation of tortures in hell as a consequence, or by a representation of the horror and hatred excited in fellow men ; but by a representation of the necessary natural results—the infliction of death-agony on the victim, the destruction of all his possibilities of happiness, the entailed sufferings to his belongings. \* \* \* Throughout, then, the moral motive differs from the motives it is

associated with in this, that instead of being constituted by representations of incidental, collateral, non-necessary consequences of acts, it is constituted by representations of consequences which the acts necessarily produce". ( Ibid, pp. 120—21 ). Thus we find that this moral control may be compared to the Moral Sense or Moral Faculty of the intuitionists, and is the result of habit produced by subordinating ourselves continuously to the external controls.

(iii) **The genesis of the feeling of moral obligation** :—The moral control gives birth to "the feeling of moral obligation", "the sentiment of duty", &c. "It is an abstract sentiment generated in a manner analogous to that in which abstract ideas are generated." It is found that " during the progress of animate existence, the later-evolved, more compound, and more representative feelings serving to adjust the conduct to more distant and general needs, have all along had an *authority* as guides superior to that of the earlier and simpler feelings. This superior authority \* \* \* has become distinctly recognized as civilization and accompanying mental development have gone on. Accumulated experiences have produced the consciousness that guidance by feelings which refer to remote and general results, is usually more conducive to welfare than guidance by feelings to be immediately gratified. \* \* \* They are all complex, re-representative feelings, occupied with the future rather than the present. The idea of *authoritativeness* has therefore come to be connected with feelings having these traits : the implication being that the lower and simpler

feelings are without authority. And this idea of authoritativeness is one element in the abstract consciousness of duty. ( Ibid, pp. 125—26. )

There is another element involved in the “abstract consciousness of duty”—viz, the element of *coerciveness*. “This originates from experience of those several forms of restraint that have established themselves in the course of civilization—the political, religious and social. To the effects of punishment inflicted by lay and public opinion on conduct of certain kinds, Dr. Bain ascribes the feeling of moral obligation. And I ( H. Spencer ) agree with him to the extent of thinking that by them is generated the sense of compulsion which the consciousness of duty includes, and which the word obligation indicates. ( Ibid, p. 127 ). This element of coercion, originally connected with the external controls or restraints, becomes indirectly associated with the moral. “For since the political, religious, and social restraining motives, are mainly formed of represented future results ; and since the moral restraining motive is mainly formed of represented future results, it happens that the representations having much in common, and being often aroused at the same time, the fear joined with the three sets of them, becomes, by association, joined with the fourth. Thinking of the extrinsic effects of a forbidden act, excites a dread which continues present while the intrinsic effects of the act are thought of ; and being thus linked with these intrinsic effects causes a vague sense of moral compulsion. Emerging as the moral motive does but slowly from amidst the political, religious and social motives, it long

participates in that consciousness of subordination to some external agency which is joined with them ; and only as it becomes distinct and predominant does it lose this associated consciousness—only then does the feeling of obligation fade.” ( Ibid, p 127 ). Thus, “the sense of duty or moral obligation is transitory, and will diminish as fast as moralization increases. The observation is not infrequent that persistence in performing a duty ends in making it a pleasure ; and this amounts to the admission that while at first the motive contains an element of coercion, at last this element of coercion dies out, and the act is performed without any consciousness of being obliged to perform it.” ( Ibid, p. 128 ). Eventually the consciousness that the action *ought* to be done disappears altogether, and the right action is done as a matter of habit with the simple feeling of satisfaction in doing it.

(iv) **Conciliation\* between Egoism and Altruism :**

The conflict of the interests of society with those of the individual which gives rise to the feeling of obligation as coercive is not, according to H. Spencer, permanent and absolute. A conciliation of these apparently antagonistic interests is possible. Both egoism and altruism are equally essential and legitimate. In a sense “egoism comes before altruism. The acts required for continued self-preservation, including the enjoyment of benefits achieved by such acts are the first requisites to universal welfare. Unless each duly cares for himself, his care for all others is ended by death ; and if



each thus dies, there remain no others to be cared for. This permanent supremacy of egoism over altruism, made manifest by contemplating existing life, is further made manifest by contemplating life in course of evolution." ( *Ibid*, pp. 187—88 ). Again, "if we define altruism as being all action which, in the normal course of things, benefits others instead of benefiting self, then, from the dawn of life, altruism has been no less essential than egoism. Though primarily it is dependent on egoism, yet secondarily egoism is dependent on it. Self-sacrifice is no less primordial than self-preservation." ( *Ibid*, p. 201 ). "For while, on the one hand, a falling short of normal egoistic acts entails enfeeblement or loss of life, and therefore loss of ability to perform altruistic acts ; on the other hand, such defect of altruistic acts as causes death of offspring, or inadequate development of them, involves disappearance from future generations of the nature that is not altruistic enough—so decreasing the average egoism. In short, every species is continually purifying itself from the unduly egoistic individuals while there are being lost to it the unduly altruistic individuals." ( *Ibid*, p. 204 ). Thus, "from the dawn of life, egoism has been dependent upon altruism as altruism has been dependent upon egoism ; and in the course of evolution, the reciprocal services of the two have been increasing". From this it is evident that "pure egoism and pure altruism are both illegitimate. If the maxim—"Live for self" is wrong, so also is the maxim—"Live for others". Hence a compromise is the only possibility." What, then, is the form such

compromise will assume ? How can their respective claims be satisfied in due degrees ? The conclusion that "general happiness is to be achieved mainly through the adequate pursuit of their own happiness by individuals, while reciprocally, the happinesses of individuals are to be achieved in part by their pursuit of the general happiness" is "embodied in the progressing ideas and usages of mankind." "This compromise between egoism and altruism has been slowly establishing itself ; and towards recognition of its propriety, men's actual beliefs have been gradually approaching. Social evolution has been bringing about a state in which the claims of the individual to the proceeds of his activities, and to such satisfactions as they bring, are more and more positively asserted ; at the same time that insistence on others' claims and habitual respect for them, have been increasing." ( Ibid, p. 238 ). In fact, "a kindred conciliation has been, and is, taking place between the interests of each citizen and the interests of citizens at large ; tending ever towards a state in which the two become merged in one, and in which the feelings answering to them respectively, fall into complete concord." Thus, "altruism of a social kind \* \* \* may be expected to attain a level at which it will be like parental altruism in spontaneity—a level such that ministration to other's happiness will become a daily need." ( Ibid, p. 243 ). "The development of *sympathy*, which must advance as fast as conditions permit, will bring about this state". The early stages of the development of sympathy are largely painful owing to the existence of "much non-

adaptation and much consequent unhappiness". "Gradually then, and only gradually, as these various causes of unhappiness become less can sympathy become greater. \* \* . But as the moulding and remoulding of man and society into mutual fitness progresses, and as the pains caused by unfitness decrease, sympathy can increase in presence of the pleasures that come from fitness. The two changes are indeed, so related that each furthers the other." (Ibid, p. 246). And in this way, ultimately, with the evolution of sympathy in the highest degree, "there will disappear that apparently permanent opposition between egoism and altruism, implied by the compromise. \* \* . Subjectively looked at, the conciliation will be such that the individual will not have to balance between self-regarding impulses and other-regarding impulses; but instead, those satisfactions of other-regarding impulses which involve self-sacrifice, becoming rare and much prized, will be so unhesitatingly preferred that the competition of self-regarding impulses with them will scarcely be felt. \* \* . Meanwhile, the conciliation objectively considered will be equally complete. Though each, no longer needing to maintain his egoistic claims, will tend rather when occasion offers to surrender them, yet others, similarly natured, will not permit him in any large measure to do this; and that fulfilment of personal desires required for competition of his life will thus be secured to him: though not now egoistic in the ordinary sense, yet the effects of due egoism will be achieved". \* \* "Far off as seems such a state, yet every one of the

factors counted on to produce it may already be traced in operation among those of highest natures. What now in them is occasional and feeble, may be expected with further evolution to become habitual and strong ; and what now characterizes the exceptionally high may be expected eventually to characterize all. For that which the best human nature is capable of, is within the reach of human nature at large." ( Ibid, pp. 256—57 ).

### Criticism.

(a) We have found that H. Spencer explains the moral life by reference to the beginning. But, is it the proper way of interpreting it ? The answer seems to be in the negative. "We may naturally expect the theory of evolution to throw light on such questions as the growth of moral feelings and ideas, and of the customs and institutions in which morality is expressed and embodied. But to show the process morality has passed through in the individual mind and in society still leaves unanswered the questions as to the moral ideal and the distinction between good and evil in conduct. It is necessary, therefore, to keep clearly before us the difference between the historical and the ethical problem \* \* \* . ( Prof. Sorley, *Ethics of Naturalism*, p. 146 ). The same view is expressed in Prof. Huxley's Romanes Lecture : "The propounders of what are called the "ethics of evolution", \* \* \* adduce a number of more or less interesting facts and more or less sound arguments, in favour of the origin of the moral sentiments, in the same way as other natural phenomena, by

a process of evolution. \* \* \* . Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of man may have come about ; but, in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before".—Evolution and Ethics ( Collected Essays, vol. IX, pp. 79—80 ) "The ethical writings of the evolutionists, indeed, often confuse the problems of history and theory" of morality. Moreover, Ethics being a normative science, it is primarily concerned with the investigation of the norm or ideal of morality. Now, the ideal of the moral life, like any other ideal, is hidden in the beginning, and becomes perceptible only in the highest stage or the goal. So that it would be more appropriate to explain the moral life by reference to the end rather than the beginning. Hence H. Spencer's way of interpreting the moral life by reference to the beginning is misleading.

(b) His theory involves the fallacy of *hysteron proteron*, i. e. putting the cart before the horse. For what is the meaning of saying that the evolution of our life consists in a continuous process of adjustment to our environment ? It cannot be denied that there is such an adjustment continually going on in our life. The progress of our knowledge, the progress of our arts, the progress of our morality and religion, all imply such adjustment. But what is the exact meaning of such adjustment ? Adjustment is the result of activity, and this activity must be directed to an end which we mean to attain by the adjustment. So that the adjustment is

a *means* to an end, not itself an end. Again, adjustment implies a standard of a relation by which we shall be able to determine whether there is, in a particular instance, such adjustment or not. Where, then, does this standard lie? It is certain that it does not lie in the consciousness of the lower animals, because they instinctively adjust themselves to their environment. But in the case of self-conscious beings as men, this adjustment is the result of their conscious effort; they want to make this adjustment, because they want to realise an ideal through it. And as the ideal can lie not in the environment but in themselves, it is rather proper to say that they are not adjusted to the environment, but they adjust the environment to themselves: or in other words, they *idealise* the environment, instead of being *naturalised* by it. If men were *merely natural beings* like the lower animals, they would be most easily adjusted to the environment; but, being self-conscious spirits, they constantly try to rise above it, or more truly, to raise it to the level of their ideal of life. Hence the never-ceasing conflict between them and the world. Adjustment is, therefore, meaningless without the presupposition of some ideal form of adjustment—some ultimate end—which they seek consciously or unconsciously, to realise, through it. If this is true, then the idea of this ultimate end should be the starting point, rather than the mere idea of the process of adjustment. “Though it seems natural, to begin at the beginning in our explanation and move on, through the process to the end; yet since in this case it is the end by

which the process is determined, it is rather at the end that we ought to begin." ( See, Prof. Mackenzie's Manual of Ethics, pp. 125—27 ; and also Pro. Alexander's Moral order and Progress, pp. 266—77 ).

(3) The alliance formed by the evolutionary ethics with Hedonism is equally unsupportable. There is a complete want of harmony between them. In the first place, "the theory of evolution is, in tendency, hostile to the egoistic principle." The conclusions of Biology controvert the main contention of Hedonism that pleasure is the only thing desired and therefore the only end of human conduct. "They show that impulse and desire precede the feeling of pleasure, and *not vice versa*. Pleasure indeed follows upon successful effort ; it is the sign of it ; but the impulse or desire to exercise the function precedes and conditions the pleasure, *not vice versa*. In human life the object gives us pleasure, in the first place, because we desire it ; we do not desire it because it gives us pleasure." We may, of course, afterwards, make the pleasure the object of our desire. These facts clearly prove that pleasure is not the only thing desired.

In the second place, the main contention of evolutionism that the "increase of life", which, as the end of evolution, is to be the portion of the "completely adapted man in the completely evolved society" is valuable, because it brings the increase of pleasure along with it, and which, thus, seems to support Hedonism, is found, on examination, to be not strictly true. No doubt, it is true that the increase of life brings about the increase of capacities and powers ; but this increase is not necessarily

followed by the increase of capacities of enjoyment, as the evolutionists contend that it is. Are the more highly developed individuals and nations happier than the less developed? The answer seems to be in the negative. For, these capacities and powers often throw them into situations which may require considerable sacrifice of their happiness. Sir. L. Stephen admits this and observes that "to exhort a man to virtue may be to exhort him to acquire a faculty which will, in many cases, make him less fit than the less moral man for getting the greatest amount of happiness from a given combination of circumstances." With regard to the incongruity between evolutionism and hedonism Prof. Sorley remarks: "The ends of evolutionism and of hedonism cannot be made to explain one another. The theory which starts with a maximum of pleasure as the ultimate end, but points to the course of evolution as showing how that end is to be realised, is confronted by the fact that *the development of life does not always tend to increased pleasure*, and that the laws of its development cannot therefore be safely adopted as maxims for the attainment of pleasure. The same objection may be taken to the method of the pleasurable results of conduct. The two do not correspond with that exactness which would admit of one doing duty for the other as a practical guide. And a further difficulty has been shown to stand in the way of this method. For, on coming to analyse pleasure, we find that it may, by habituation, arise from any—or almost any—course of conduct which is consistent with the conditions of existence. The evolutionist, therefore,



can have no surer idea of greatest pleasure—even although this may not be a very sure one—than that it will follow in the train of the greatest or most varied activity which harmonises with the laws of life.” (Ethics of Naturalism, pp. 243-44). Again, “the course of evolution does not tend to increase the pleasure in life at the expense of the pain in it, and that, therefore, even although pleasure and evolution may both of them be possible ends of conduct, they are ends which point in different directions and lead to different courses of action.” (Ibid, p. 216).

(d) Another serious defect in H. Spencer's theory is that his hypothesis that the goal of evolution is the perfect equilibrium between function and environment is itself open to a grave doubt. The very nature of evolution is that it is a process of struggle. When this struggle comes to an end, when an absolute state of equilibrium is established between function and environment, when every kind of pain and conflict is excluded from it, the completely adapted man reaches a state which has no other analogue than death. It is a state of absolute death—absolute *Nirvan*, not a state of life—a living struggle. Evolution does not know such a state of complete cessation of activity. It is true that H. Spencer describes such a state as a state of “moving equilibrium,” not as a state of absolute stagnation. (Cf. Prof. Alexander, Moral Order and Progress, p 268, § 8). But the difficulty cannot be obviated in this way. In this connection Prof. Sorley has truly observed : “if ‘adaptation’ is still regarded as expressing the end, then, the more perfect this adapta-

tion is the less room seems left for change, and consequently, for progress, and the end of human conduct is placed in a state of moving equilibrium in which action takes place without a jar and without disturbing the play of external conditions." ( *Ethics of Naturalism*, p 252 ). Again, such a state of perfect equilibrium cannot be shown to lead to happiness. There seems to be no necessary correspondence between "the establishment of the greatest perfection, and most complete happiness." "It is not at all certain that the result of perfectly adapted function would be a continuance of greatly increased pleasure. It is true that all the pains of disharmony between inner desire or feeling and outer circumstances would, in such a case, disappear ; but with them also there would be lost the varied pleasures of pursuit and successful struggle. It cannot even be assumed that other pleasures would continue as intense as before. For, as acts are performed more easily, and thus with less conscious volition, they gradually pass into the background of consciousness, or out of consciousness altogether ; and the pleasure accompanying them fades gradually away as they cease to occupy the attention, 'where action is perfectly automatic, feeling does not exist'. ( *Spencer, Psychology*, § 212, i, 478 ). The so-called 'passive' pleasures might still remain. But the act of effort being no longer necessary for adjustment of inner to outer relations might have the effects of making the "moving equilibrium" still called "life" automatic in every detail. Indeed, if the suggestions of the "First Principles" ( p 489 ) are to be carried out, it would seem

that the moving equilibrium is a 'transitional state on the way to complete equilibrium,' which is another name for death. So far, therefore, from heightened pleasure being the result of completely perfect adjustment of inner to outer relations, this adjustment would seem to reach its natural goal in unconsciousness." (Ibid, pp. 256—57). This conclusion that "we ought to promote the end of evolution and that this end is annihilation, is inconsistent with the postulate always implied by Spencer's ethics—the postulate that conduct should promote evolution because life is desirable, and increase of life comes with the process of evolution."

Even if it is supposed that such a state is possible, it is doubtful whether it can be the idea of life to a man as man, i. e. as a self-conscious spirit. For the absolute cessation of activity means the cessation of his self-consciousness. It is something like Buddhistic *Nirvan*.

(e) H. Spencer's account of the genesis of the moral consciousness seems to be beside the mark. According to him the moral consciousness is the consciousness of the control of the presentative feelings by the representative feelings; and this control, not being natural, is effected by the agency of some external restraints which produce, through habituation, another restraint called *moral*. This moral restraint, then, like the Moral Sense or Conscience of the intuitionists, becomes an independent internal force which rules the presentative feelings, subordinating them to the representative. In this account a confusion is evidently involved. The so-called moral control, though internal, is only a product of the

“external controls” and is, therefore, *psychological* in character, not *moral* at all. Here, therefore, what *is* is confounded with what *ought to be*—the history of a fact with its validity. In this connection Dr. Sidgwick has truly observed : “we may observe that *prima facie* this is an explanation of how our moral sentiments and current rules have come to be what they are, not a deduction of what our rules ought to be. The distinction between them is very important \* \* \* .”

Again, it is very difficult to see how merely external controls can produce an internal control quite independent of them unless it already exists in human nature, in inchoate form, as a principle capable of ruling and organising the feelings; because if the two classes of feelings presentative and representative are absolutely antagonistic and unrelated to one another, no force in the world can harmonise them. ( The further development of this point may be found in the criticism of the doctrine of “moral sanctions” in Chap. IV of this Book ).

Even if it is supposed that such a product is possible, the consequence of it will be that man will be perfectly *naturalised* ; “the laws of his environment, physical and social, will become the laws of his own life ; the moulding of him into the form of his environment will be perfected.” “Thus the evolution of morality will fall within the evolution of nature, and only a fancied emancipation from the necessity of ‘nature of things’ is only a demonstration of the perfection of nature’s mastery over us.” Is such a complete naturalisation of man

possible, having regard to the fact that he is also a rational and thus a supernatural being ? In fact, Spencer's whole account of the genesis of the moral consciousness is based on the erroneous supposition that man is essentially a natural being and even his reason is a product of natural processes and that, thus, the moral process is reducible to a natural process. ( See the criticism of Utilitarianism in Chap. IV of this Book ).

Spencer's account of the genesis of the sense of moral obligation is also full of inconsistencies. Moral consciousness involves the sense of moral obligation which, again, involves the elements of *authoritativeness* and *coerciveness*. But he tells us that the sense of obligation diminishes as fast as moralisation increases, and disappears altogether when the moral consciousness is perfectly developed, i. e. when it becomes perfectly independent of its association with the external controls. It is not difficult to see that the element of coerciveness which is transferred to the moral control by its association with the external controls from which it originates, may, with the separation of the former from the latter, drop altogether ; but it is very difficult to see why the element of *authoritativeness* also will disappear as moralisation increases. For the disappearance of the element of authoritativeness means the disappearance of the authoritativeness of the representative feelings over the presentative, and thus the disappearance of the moral consciousness itself.

Infact, the moral consciousness does not involve any element of external coercion as supposed by Spencer.

The very idea of external coercion is opposed to the idea of morality. Morality consists in free obedience to a self-imposed law ; and the action done from external coercion is not moral at all. And even when this element of external coercion is dropped with the increase of moralisation, the action is still *non-moral*, inasmuch as it is determined by an impulse ( i. e. the moral control ) which itself is non-moral. The truth is, the sense of moral obligation or duty cannot be accounted for on the hedonistic principle. The ethics of sensibility is the science of "is" or "must", not a theory of "ought-to-be". The true element of coercion involved in the moral consciousness is the element of *internal* coercion which is imposed by the moral ideal upon the actual—by the higher or rational self upon the lower or sensuous self ; in a word, it is a self-imposed coercion—it is true freedom. Therefore, instead of disappearing, the strength of authoritativeness and coercion increases as fast as moralisation increases ; the more a man becomes moralised the more does he feel their rigor ; the demand of the sense of duty grows more and more imperative as it develops.

(f) Spencer's attempt to reconcile egoism and altruism is likewise a failure. He has described only the process by which they have come to be reconciled in the course of years or ages. But this is not accounting for the "should be" of such reconciliation. Why should egoism and altruism be reconciled at all ? Why should they not be allowed to go on fighting with one another ? These questions are left unanswered by him. Here,

therefore, as elsewhere, he confounds history with validity—science with ethics—“is” or “must” with “ought-to-be”. The fact is, egoism and altruism cannot be reconciled from the standpoint of hedonism. Hedonism starts with the presupposition that human nature is essentially *sentient*, and thus the egoistic and altruistic impulses are absolutely antagonistic to one another without having any principle of unity and organisation back of them. Hence the hedonist's attempt to reconcile them through the agency of some external pressures variously called “sanctions”, “controls”, &c. But we have found in the critical examination of the doctrine of “sanctions of morality,” ( Chapter IV of this Book ) how such an attempt has failed altogether. Even some of the prominent hedonists admit the impossibility of reconciling egoism and altruism on purely hedonistic principle. Sir L. Stephen admits a permanent conflict between the path of duty and the path of happiness ; and that by acting rightly, even the virtuous man will sometimes be making a sacrifice. He also acknowledges that there is a permanent dualism between the “prudential” and the “social” rules of life. Even Spencer acknowledges “a deep and involved”, though not permanent, “derangement of the natural connections between pleasures and beneficial actions, and between pains and detrimental actions”. Prof. Sorley observes that “the feeling of pleasure is just the point where individualism is strongest, and in regard to which mankind, instead of being an organism in which each part but subserves the purposes of the whole, must rather be regarded as a collection of

competing and co-operating units." ( Ethics of Naturalism, p. 183 ).

#### (4) Sir Leslie Stephen's Ethical Views :

We have found that according to H. Spencer the ultimate end of conduct is the perfect preservation and development of life, and that such preservation and development consist in the perfect adjustment between the organism and environment, the latter including not only the physical world, but also society. Thus the adjustment to society is included in the supreme end of conduct. But, yet, his conception of the relation between the individual and society seems, after all, to be individualistic ;—the individuals are still distinct and independent units, and thus the supreme end of life is, directly, self-preservation, and only indirectly, race-preservation ; because it is found from experience that the self and the race develop *pari passu*, and thus aid one another's preservation and development. And his treatment of egoism and altruism plainly shows that he has never tried to reconcile them by applying the conception of the *social organism*. He has, therefore, omitted the consideration of this important point in the interpretation of his ethical views. In his "Science of Ethics" Sir Leslie Stephen has applied this conception with sufficient skill to interpret the moral facts. He distinguishes the *empirical* utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill from the *scientific* utilitarianism as propounded by himself. The former is based upon the erroneous conception that society is a mechanical aggregate of persons, and that, thus, the rela-



tion between individuals and society is merely *external* and *mechanical* ; while the latter regards society as an organism—an organised system of persons, thus conceiving the relation between it and its constituent members to be wholly *internal* and *organic*. Though the empirical utilitarians speak of “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” as the supreme good, yet they regard “the greatest number” as a mechanical aggregate of independent units—the individuals. But the true unit, according to him, is not the individual, but society. Again, neither the individual nor society is static, as the empirical utilitarians suppose them to be, but they change—grow and develop—and march towards a goal—the evolution of the social “type”, or the “most vitally efficient” form of society in which all the members are so integrated that they most harmoniously co-operate to promote its welfare with greatest efficiency.

Such being the case, the ultimate end of conduct should not be merely to produce the “greatest happiness” whether of the individual, or of “the greatest number”, but to promote the health and efficiency of the social organism, or more properly, of the “social tissue”. For, human life is not a merely mechanical aggregate of distinct and isolated acts, the pleasurable or painful consequences of which may be definitely and separately calculated ; but an organic growth, each act in which has a significance in so far as it affects, for good or ill, not only its temporary state, but also the very “substance of its fundamental structure”. “The scientific criterion, therefore, is not happiness, but health,” and the true starting

point of all ethical investigation must begin, not with the individual, but with society ; because the welfare of the individual can be known only when the welfare of the whole is known, just as the welfare of a limb is known when we know the welfare of the organism as a whole. Hence the true law of the moral life is obtained by knowing the law of the social organism. In this way he substitutes the health or efficiency of society for "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" of Bentham and Mill, and the "absolute end" of H. Spencer, as the supreme end of conduct. But, yet, he is a hedonist. Happiness and health are, according to him, not two really divergent criteria, but "on the contrary, they necessarily tend to coincide". "The 'useful' in the sense of pleasure-giving, must approximately coincide with 'useful' in the sense of life-preserving. \* \* \*

We must suppose that pain and pleasure are the correlatives of certain states which may be roughly regarded as the smooth and the distracted working of the physical machinery, and that, given those states, the sensation must always be present." And we are told that these two forms of utility tend to coincide along with the evolution of society.

Now, social welfare being the ultimate end of conduct, our duty consists in the fulfilment of the conditions of such welfare. Hence, "a moral rule is a statement of a condition of social welfare", and morality, "the sum of the preservative instincts of a society." Virtue consists in efficiency to maintain the social equilibrium ; and a man's virtuousness varies directly with

this efficiency. Man, as an integral member of society, cannot but be sympathetic ; and this sympathetic nature, being "pre-eminently useful to the social organism," is fostered and developed, and in course of time becomes "extended and enlightened". "Every extension of reasoning power implies a wider and closer identification of self with others, and therefore, a greater tendency to merge the prudential in the social axiom as a first principle of conduct." Thus arises the conscience, the subjective side of morality, which is nothing but the social instinct or sympathy for the social welfare or health. Hence, "the conscience is the utterance of the public spirit of the race, ordering us to fulfil the primary conditions of its welfare."

The problem of conciliation between egoism and altruism can be easily solved by applying the idea of the "social organism". The egoistic and altruistic impulses represent the two correlative sides of the individual. The former class of impulses represents that side of him in virtue of which he is a distinct being, differing from all other individuals, and the latter represents that side in virtue of which he is an integral part of society. Thus there is no absolute antagonism between these two classes of impulses. "The difference between the sympathetic and non-sympathetic feelings is a difference in their law or in the fundamental axiom which they embody." "The sympathetic being becomes, in virtue of his sympathies, a constituent part of a larger organisation. He is no more intelligible by himself alone than the limb is in all its properties intelligible without

reference to the body." Thus these two apparently opposite classes of impulses naturally tend to coincide as moralisation increases, and ultimately merge into each other in such a wise as leave no gap between them. In this way, in the course of evolution, there is produced "not merely a type of conduct, but a type of character, not merely altruistic conduct, but 'the elaboration and regulation of the sympathetic character which takes place through the social factor'."

### (5) Prof. S. Alexander's Ethical views :

Prof. Alexander also applies the idea of the social organism, or rather "the social order" as called by him, to explain the moral facts. "We must neither assume," says he, "that the individual is an independent atom, nor that there is an authoritative and binding command which is given irrespectively of him. On the contrary, we must take society and the individual as we find them in fact, the latter with ties that bind him to others, the former as something which we have never known to be formed by the mere coalescence of separate and independent individuals." (Moral Order and Progress, p 96 ). We may therefore consider the individual from two stand-points : (a) we may take his life by itself, or (b) we may take it as related to the life of society. In both cases the life is an organisation of acts.

(a) In the individual life all the acts are unified into a system or order ; so that a particular "act is required by the past and the future needs of the individual, taken as he is with all his faculties." "Thus a good act implies

an order or system of acts which are regulated by reference to each other. By the success with which it attains the standard required by its own place in this system its goodness is decided. The good life as a whole is a system of conscious acts, where each function has its limits prescribed to it by the demands of all other functions, so that no faculty shall perform its functions to the detriment of another." "The goodness of an act, then, appears to depend upon its occupying a definite position in an equilibrated order of action." "A vice implies a distortion or caricature of the nature, whether in the way of excess or defect, which leaves the complete meaning of the nature undeveloped; vice sins against the dignity of human nature, because it throws the mind off its balance." (Ibid, pp. 88—100). Again, "the good character by conformity to which any act is judged as good or bad is thus an order or systematic arrangement of volitions \* \* \*. Any character, whether good or bad, consists of the various conscious acts which, by their connection with one another, and the promise they contain of future action, present a man as embodying a law or plan, whatever that plan may be. In the good character all the parts consist with one another." (Ibid, p 104). From a slightly different standpoint, i. e. from the stand-point of its structure, good conduct may be considered as "built upon a man's needs or his desires, and is defined as satisfying every part of his nature in its proportion. Morality establishes therefore an equilibrium or balance between the parts of a man's nature, understanding by that expression the

various feelings, love, hunger, anger, and the like, which are gratified by action, and including in them not only personal wants, but susceptibilities to the needs of others. \* \* \* Morality means, therefore, an equilibrium of the moral sentiments, and conversely any sentiment is moral which can be equilibrated with the rest." ( *Ibid*, pp 106—107 ). "The good man may therefore be described either as an equilibrated order of conduct, or equilibrium of moral sentiments, or of the parts of his nature." "The conception of a man's character is represented under the name of an *ideal*—a plan of conduct or way of life upon which he acts. A bad man's way of life is his ideal as much as the good man's, and every one of his acts implies such an ideal. \* \* . The good man's life is the good or moral ideal. It is therefore not called an ideal to imply that it is unattainable. On the contrary, every man acts on his own ideal and the good man realises the moral." ( *Ibid*, pp. 106—110 ).

(*b*) As regarded from the stand-point of society, "the predicate 'good' applied to an action involves more than the bare fact of a common interest of several individuals. It means that the act is one by which the agent seeks to perform the function required of him by his position in society. The conception of "efficiency" which was adopted by Clifford to express the moral ideal, expresses what is required by the moral judgment of every act. Such efficiency depends upon two things, that each person has a definite place which requires of him a determinate work ; and secondly, that work is settled by reference to the conflicting claims of all, or

to the demands of the whole society. \* \* \* It is enough that no act is regarded as good which does not at once satisfy the agent's position in the whole, and maintain a certain relation between him and others, which secures them a like freedom in their work. Taking any society as it stands, we find that there are two conditions which all good conduct must fulfil : it must secure certain claims or wants on the part of the person who is performing it, but these claims must be such as are compatible with similarly recognised efforts on the parts of all others. Every body's work is different, but the duties of all are mutually involved." Therefore, "what morality requires is that each person should find his place in a manner compatible with the same claims on the part of all,—the highest specialisation being identical with the completest unity. It thus involves an equilibrium between the members of the society—an order or system in which the function of each are maintained." "Moral precepts are judgments which guide us in giving utterance to these needs in conduct. Such precepts express the proposition in which individuals are adjusted one to the other, the adjustment taking place on the basis of these needs and impulses." ( Ibid, pp. 113, 114, 117 ). Thus, "good and bad acts and conducts are distinguished by their adjustment or failure of adjustment to the social order. Good conduct falls within the order : bad conduct fails to adjust itself and is condemned. The social order is therefore an order of equilibrium in which every part has its claims fully recognised." ( Ibid, p 127 ). Hence, in a sense, all morality is

*social*, and so is the moral ideal, i. e. *the equilibrium of the social order* is the ultimate criterion of right and wrong in conduct ; and the supreme good is to promote and preserve such equilibrium.

In this way we get two criteria or ideals of morality. From the standpoint of the individual the ideal is "the good man's life" ; and from the standpoint of society it is "the equilibrium of the social order". How can we reconcile these two ideals ? Prof. Alexander's reply is : "the individual by himself was described as an order of volitions, all of which in their continuity made up his character. On the other hand, as social, he was shown to enter into relations with his fellows, which determined his place and theirs in the order of conduct. But every activity of his own is his contribution to the relations which subsist between him and others. It is one terminal point of the line which joins him to them. The balance and order that exists between his own activities, regarded as confined within himself, is therefore identical with the systematic relations that connect him with society." "The moral individual is thus the reproduction in small of the social order, utilising all his powers on the plan required alike for fulfilling his own function in that order. and for harmonising them with one another in his own life. \* \* \* What constitutes the good individual life is therefore not a matter to be settled only within his own mind, but depends upon his social functions, and is determined by the social order." ( Ibid, pp. 135, 136 ). Thus we find that there are really not two ideals, but one, viewed from two standpoints.



Now an important question suggests itself : How does this moral ideal originate ? or, how is the moral equilibrium produced ? In making this inquiry Prof. Alexander starts with the hypothesis that there is a close analogy between a moral ideal and a natural species—"the moral ideal as a system or order of conduct is simply the representation of morality as an organism." He then goes on to observe : "we find the moral ideal so far agreeing with a natural species, that in course of time, by accumulation of small differences, it leaves its original character behind, and developes into a new form. We have still to show what the process is by which one ideal comes to occupy the place of another. I believe that it is effected by a struggle of ideals which proceeds on the analogy of the struggle of natural species, and that it is the same process which leads to the variety of facts summed up under the head of moral development or progress." ( Ibid, p. 296 ). Thus arises his famous theory of—

**Natural Selection in Morals :—**The theory of "natural selection" is the name for the process by which "a new species is produced through giving rise to variations which struggle with one another and with the parent species. One of these varieties, in virtue of some natural advantage, is successful over its opponents, and in virtue of this success it produces offspring and overruns the region within which the species was formed." "In the light of this process we may contrast the good and bad in any one age as different varieties of one and the same original ideal. All good men, so

far as good, represent ideals which are the individual members of one variety represented by the good ideal ; their various degrees of perfection correspond to more or less strong, or swift, or big members of the animal species. All bad men, so far as bad, act upon ideals which form other varieties. There is a variety of thieves, of murderers, and the like. The distinction of good and bad corresponds to the domination of one variety, that of the good, which has come to prevail according to the process described in virtue of its being a social equilibrium. Its being a social equilibrium corresponds to the natural advantage of the successful animal variety ; for this natural advantage is nothing more than suitability to all its conditions of life. The good ideal, then, has been created by a struggle of ideals in which it has predominated. Evil is simply that which has been rejected and defeated in the struggle with the good." ( Ibid, pp. 306—307 ). "Hence the difference of good and bad represents in reality the struggle or antagonism by which the good establishes its predominance. In condemning a man for a bad act, what you say to him is in effect, your ideal is not the ideal which predominates and is the social equilibrium. The act of condemnation represents the defeat of this ideal in conflict with the successful variety which is the new species, and our approvals or disapprovals are witnesses of the perpetual struggle of good against bad ideals. In declaring an ideal bad, we deny its reality, deny that it is the true ideal and we seek to exterminate it." ( Ibid p 308 ).

“But even more important than the demonstration of how the struggle of natural kinds is repeated in man under the form of good and evil, is to bear in mind the difference of the two cases. In morality the struggle is between *ideals*, and persons are concerned only as the bearers of these ideals. Ideals of conduct exist in minds (wills), not in bodies. Hence two important differences. The animal variety predominates by two concurrent methods : it multiplies its offspring and it exterminates other animals, and these two things are practically the same, for other animals die out before the spread of the successful. But in man the predominance of the good does not always require, and except in extreme cases never requires, the extinction of the opposing person, but only the extinction of his ideal, or its retirement from his mind or will in favour of the good ideals. \* \* \*

In the next place, whereas animals multiply by propagation of new individuals, the moral ideal acquires strength by teaching and example, and it acquires adherents not only among the new generation, but among the old. It spreads by converting the lukewarm or the hostile, the ideal being conveyed from one mind to another. Hence while if an animal variety were composed of only a few individuals it would perish, the reformer's cause may win though he individually is destroyed. His ideal lives on in the minds of those whom he has influenced, and his influence may grow greater with his death. Once more it is plain that here too extinction of opponents is identical with multiplication of the variety ; for it is the teaching or convincing

of his fellows which wins the reformer friends, and extirpates their former ideals. Both in the struggle of ideals and in that of species it will be seen how success means actual increase of number." ( *Ibid*, pp. 309—310 ).

**Criticism :—**(1) The most difficult problem of Universalistic Hedonism is the reconciliation between egoism and altruism—the interests of the individual and the interests of others ; and to work out this problem Sir. Leslie Stephen and Prof. Alexander have resorted to the conception of the social organism. It is, therefore, necessary to examine how far this conception is able to reconcile the interests of individuals. "At most the theory of organic evolution can make out that there is a tendency towards the identification of the interests of the individual with those of society. It cannot demonstrate a complete identification. The community has indeed been called an organism, and the individual spoken of as a cell in the tissue of which it is composed ; but we must avoid pressing this analogy to the point of breaking. Among so many points of similarity between society and an individual organism, there is one essential distinction,—the social organism has no feelings and thoughts but those of its individual members—the conscious centre is in the unit, not in the whole ; whereas, when we regard the individual organism and its constituent members, consciousness is seen to exist only in the whole, not in each several unit. The absence of a 'social sensorium' should, therefore, make us hesitate to identify the ends of individual with those of collective action ; for, to a certain extent, the

individual can distinguish his own interests from those of the society, and prefer the former : so that the organic unity is incomplete. Every cell in the individual body has a life-history of its own, besides partaking of the life of the organism ; and, did it possess the reason which "looks before and after" it also might conceivably adopt an egoistic attitude, and object to the subordination of its private interests to the good of the whole. In the same way, the many individual lives which make up the social organism—since each of them possesses a separate consciousness—are apt to disregard the life of the larger whole whose members they are." No doubt, the evolutionist utilitarians would tell them to seek their own happiness in the happiness of the community. "But the obvious remark must be borne in mind, that society, the social organism, cannot experience happiness. However it may resemble the individual organism in the manner of its growth, the modes of its activity, and even its relation to its component members, yet it cannot feel pleasure or pain as an individual does. The 'happiness of the community' does not mean the happiness of the social organism, but is only a concise formula for the aggregate happinesses of the individuals composing it." "When it is said, therefore—either as a political or an ethical theory—that the happiness of society is the end for conduct, the end prescribed is *altruistic rather than social*. Its object is not an organism, but an aggregate of individuals." So long, therefore, as the end is pleasure, it must have reference to individuals." ( *Ethics of Naturalism*, pp.

180—182 ) Hence on purely hedonistic principle it is impossible to merge the individual in society—to reconcile egoism with altruism. The social organism is, after all, a metaphor, which is, as, Sir. Leslie Stephen fears, “too vague to bear much argumentative stress”. As Prof. James Seth truly remarks, “from the point of view of pleasure, society is not an organism, but an aggregate of individuals ; and if we speak of the health of the society, we cannot mean its happiness, but simply the general conditions of the happiness of its individual members. It does not feel, they alone do.” ( *A Study of Ethical Principles*, pp 132—133 ).

(2) Again, these theories cannot be regarded as the complete explanation of the moral ideal. They only describe how the moral ideal has been originated and come to be what it is ;—they have, that is, described the natural history of the moral ideal, but not what it *ought to be*. But ethics is not concerned with the genesis and development of the moral ideal and the moral life, but with the questions : why is such ideal worth following, and why is such life worth living ? In other words, the primary function of ethics is to determine the *ground of preference* of one kind of conduct or ideal over another—not the “is” or “must” of the conduct or ideal, but their “ought-to-be”; and the solution of this problem does not consist in simply describing how one kind has succeeded in driving out the other. “Natural Selection” can, at most, explain *how* a thing has become what it is, not *why* it *should be* such ; and there are numerous instances in which the survived are vicious and the vanquished are

virtuous, and *vice versa*. This fact is admitted by Prof. Alexander himself. "A new plan of life", says he, "is not made good because it succeeds ; its success is the stamp, the *imprimatur* affixed to it by the course of history, the sign that it is good." Even H. Spencer admitted that "the survival of the fittest is not always the survival of the best \* \* \* the 'fittest', throughout a wide range of cases—perhaps the widest range—are not the 'best.'" ( Various Fragments, p. 114 ). What is it, then, that makes the ideal or plan of life good ? His answer is, it is good, because it adapts life to the conditions of existence—it adjusts society to its environment—it helps society to be in a state of equilibrium. Well. But we may ask why *should* we desire the equilibrium of society and its adjustment to its environment ? Why should we not desire, rather, its disorganisation and destruction ? In other words, what is it that makes the equilibrium and adjustment, not their opposite, *a good* for us ? Neither Sir. Leslie Stephen nor Prof. Alexander has ever tried to answer these questions with any satisfaction. They have answered, as we have found, the questions of natural history, instead of the questions of ethics. In this connection Prof. Sorley has truly observed : "the conception of social equilibrium has thrown no more light on the ethical problem than the conception of adaptation to environment did. The social order or environment must be assumed *as good* before we can say that the goodness of conduct consists in adaptation to, or equilibrium with, it."

We may ask, again, what is the nature of this so-called equilibrium ? Is it stationary or mobile ? Prof.

Alexander tells us that it is a "moving equilibrium"—it is stationary for a moment and overturned at the next ; "goodness is in perpetual movement : so soon as it is attained it becomes evil, and a fresh standard of goodness arises". ( *Moral Order and Progress*, p. 290 ). "The equilibrium is after all but an imaginary state, the result of an imperfect and momentary view of the process : if we look a moment longer we see that the forces are moving forward towards a new distribution, itself to be displaced almost as soon as it appears. What significance is there then in continuing to say that goodness consists in such an equilibrium"? Moreover, "no reason has been given for taking the presence of equilibrium as either the something as, or as a test of goodness. Besides, it is admitted that, if there is equilibrium at all, it is but for a moment : movement is the rule of life ; and as we pass from the state of one moment to face the future, is there no other guide for conduct than this will-o'-the-wisp called equilibrium ? 'If we assume', says Prof. Alexander,—and this may be taken as his answer to the question—'that the change of ideals is not merely a change but a progress, we may describe morality as the creation of a 'better'. But in this assumption the whole ethical question is begged. If we call the change a progress, we have thereby assumed that it is towards a 'better' state. And on what grounds can the assumption be justified ? \* \* \* But if change is held to be a progress and to point to a better, the assumption is made that evolution is an ethical process—that the 'fittest' which it tends to preserve are also the morally 'best'. If we do make this assump-



tion, then the ethical conception is presupposed in our view of evolution and not derived from it. If, on the other hand, we do not make the assumption, our distinction between good and evil comes to be only a distinction between successful persistence and failure in a struggle : the good will be simply 'what has come to prevail' and the evil 'that which has been rejected and defeated.'" ( Prof. Sorley, *Ethics of Naturalism*, pp. 261—263 ).

(3) The real resolution of the above difficulties consists, not in describing how a conduct or ideal has brought about the adaptation of society to, or its equilibrium with, the environment, but in showing that the adaption or the equilibrium is *good*, i. e. something that can be an ideal for our moral life. Or, in other words, we must show that they are *moral good*, not *physical good*. If we can show this, then we may start with that ideal, and explain the process by it, not it by the process. "We go through the process of development, *because* we are seeking that ideal. The end, and not the beginning, is thus taken as the principle of explanation."

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## CHAPTER VI.

### The Standard as Perfection.

#### II. PERFECTIONISM, EUDAEMONISM, ENERGISM.

(1) **Explanation by End** :—We have found how the explanation of the moral life by its beginning has completely failed, and also how it can be more conveniently and appropriately accounted for by reference to the end. Indeed H. Spencer has not entirely repudiated the explanation by reference to the end, even though his main aim has been directed to the explanation by the beginning. We are not very far from truth if we say that he has actually tried to explain the moral life by reference to a *telos* or end, viz, "the struggle after a perfect adjustment between the function and environment" ; his mistake lies in his attempt to discover the characteristics of that end by examining the life of the lower animals which is not at all moral and in which, therefore, they are absent. So that the true starting point should be, not the life of the lower animals, but the life of man himself ; and it is by analysing and examining such life that we can discover the characteristics of the ultimate end towards which our life is progressing. As Prof. Sorley truly remarks : "the character of the course of evolution is seen in a different light when it is recognised that human conduct and its methods must be taken into account in interpreting the process. The scientific writers who have been most forward in pressing the claim that man must be held to be a part of the cosmic process have also, unfortunately

been inclined to interpret the whole process, not as it is, but as it would be apart from human intervention and the ideals which man brings to bear upon it. But the claim that man must be interpreted as part of the universe involves the counterclaim that the nature of the universe cannot be understood apart from the distinctive features of man's activity. And when this is allowed, the naturalistic interpretation of evolution becomes increasingly difficult. Evolution can no longer be regarded as entirely purposeless, for that part of it which we call human conduct undoubtedly displays purpose. It cannot be entirely indifferent or antagonistic to morality, for the action of men, which enters into the process, bears the impress of moral ideas." ( *Ethics of Naturalism*, pp. 331—32 ). Thus we find there is a deeper teleological meaning involved in our moral life. What this higher and deeper meaning is, we are now going to consider.

## (2) **The true Nature of the Moral Ideal :**

The preceding discussions about the standards of the moral judgments have thus far revealed the fact that there is a fundamental dualism in ethical thoughts corresponding to the fundamental dualism in the nature and life of man. We have found that there are two rival types of ethical theory, viz, the *ethics of reason*, and the *ethics of sensibility*. The former is based upon the presupposition that human nature is essentially *rational*—the true life of man is the rational life ; and that, though he also possesses a sentient nature like the lower animals, yet, reason is recognised as the essential

attribute which differentiates him from them. ( Rationalism ). The Sankhists, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics in ancient times, and Kant, the Neo-Kantians and the intuitionists in general in modern times, may be regarded as the leading exponents of this doctrine. Whereas the latter is founded on the presupposition that the human nature is essentially *sentient*, and that though he possesses also reason, yet, sensibility is the primary attribute which he shares with the lower animals, and "reason is the servant of feeling, a minister to be consulted always, and listened to with respect and confidence, but still a minister only and not a ruler in the party conflict of the soul." The true life of man is, thus, conceived to be the pleasant or happy life. ( Hedonism ). The Charvakists, the Cyrenaics, the Epicureans in ancient times, and Hobbes, Bentham, Hume, James Mill, J. S. Mill, Bain, Spencer, &c. in modern times, are the leading exponents of this doctrine. These two opposite currents of ethical theories have, thus, been running parallel from the very dawn of human reflection and have permeated all the departments of thoughts as are embodied in philosophy and literature. Corresponding to these two rival types of ethical theories we have also two rival types of men—the Stoic and the Epicurean, the unworldly and the worldly.

But closer examination into human nature reveals the fact that it is neither exclusively rational nor exclusively sentient ; it is a synthesis of both—it is rational, realising itself in and through the sensibility, i. e. the appetites, passions and affections. So that both reason

and sensibility, taken by themselves, are abstract, and become real when regarded as the two distinct but correlated sides of the real or concrete self. ( See Chap. II of this Book ). Consequently the two opposite ethical theories founded upon such abstract conceptions of human nature are equally abstract or one-sided. The true moral ideal should be the ideal of the concrete self, and the true ethical theory should be an attempt at reconciling these abstract and incomplete theories by recognising the rights of reason and the rights of sensibility, and thus reducing them to the "unity of a common life governed by a single central principle." For these reasons this third ethical theory may be called the "ethics of reconciliation", or more technically, the "ethics of personality". This task was attempted, to a great extent, in ancient time by the writers of the *Upanishads*, Plato and Aristotle, and to a full extent, in modern times by Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians such as, Green, Caird, Mackenzie, Muirhead, Dewey, Seth, Paulsen and others. ( Perfectionism, Eudæmonism, Energism ).

Now, according to the three ethical doctrines as described above, we get three distinct moral goods : according to Rationalism the absolute good consists in the realisation of the rational self,—in absolute surrender to the moral imperative—to the law of reason—or in a word, in the good will ; according to Hedonism the supreme good is the realisation of the sentient self—the satisfaction of the appetites, passions and affections—"the subjective feeling of pleasure, regardless of how it

is produced" ; and according to Perfectionism, it is the perfect realisation of the total self—the self as a whole,—or "it is the objective development of individual and social human life, regardless of whether it yields pleasure or not," it being held, of course, "such a life is actually experienced with inner satisfaction." Thus we find that the general form of the absolute good is *self-realisation*. But it is particularly the last theory that maintains that the supreme good of the moral life is the perfection or complete realisation of the self, meaning by self the *total self*—the self which is the organic unity of reason and sensibility.

Now, to clearly understand the true significance of the total self and of self-realisation, we should, even at the risk of repetition, carefully state the distinction between the "individuality" and "personality" of man. Man is an individual like the lower animals inasmuch as he asserts himself, like them, against other individuals and "excludes these latter from his life, and struggles with them for the means of his own satisfaction" i. e. he leads a life of appetites, passions, affections, &c. like the lower animals, and is, so far, an *animal*. But he is more than an individual—an animal ; he is also a *person*—a self-conscious spirit. So that he is neither a pure animal nor a pure spirit—he is rather a spirit working out his realisation in and through the animal life—working out his destiny, i. e. his liberation from the bondage of the flesh and blood, by using it as the means to the fulfilment of his own nature. As in his knowledge—in his intellectual life, the sensations which are "given" from outside

are systematised into a unitary and continuous life by the activity of reason ( i. e. pure reason or understanding ), or in other words, as his intellectual life is a unity of sensations and reason ; so in his moral life the appetites, passions, affections, &c. that arise out of the wants of the physical organism and are, therefore, “given” from outside, are also systematised into a unitary and continuous life by the activity of reason ( i. e. practical or moral reason )—or in other words, his moral life is also a unity of feelings and reason. Thus the sensibility of man supplies only the crude, incoherent, and isolated materials in the form of sensations and feelings ; but it is reason which constructs the life of intellect and morality out of them. As with Kant we can say that “understanding makes nature”, so also we can say that “reason makes the moral life”. Why does reason make nature and the moral life ? It makes them, because it wants to realise itself, i. e. to attain the perfection or fulfilment of its own nature ; and it can do so only by integrating the crude materials into rational systems denominated the intellectual and moral life. Hence the absolute moral imperative is, in words of Hegel, “Be a person”, i. e. “constitute, out of your natural individuality, the true or ideal self of personality”—control and organise your appetites, passions, affections and desires in such a wise as to make them the true instrument to the development of your rational nature. Plato and Aristotle express the same view. “The highest good is life and action in harmony with the idea ; the eudæmonia of a man consists in the possession and exercise of

all human virtues and capacities. The Stoa teaches the same. Life according to nature is the end of every being ; for man, therefore, a life conforming to human nature, that is, to reason, is the absolute end ; in it he finds his welfare."

In the eloquent word of Prof. Paulsen we can, therefore, say : "That human life will be the most valuable which succeeds best in developing the highest powers of man and in subordinating the lower functions to the higher. A life, on the other hand, in which vegetative and animal functions, sensuous desires and blind passions, have control, must be regarded as a lower or abnormal form. A perfect human life is a life in which the *mind* attains to free and full growth, and in which the *spiritual forces* reach their highest perfection in *thought, imagination and action*. \* \* \* Yet we must guard against a false spiritualization. The sensuous and even the animal side have their rights. The pleasures of perception and play which throw such a glamour around childhood, also belong to life ; nay, we shall not exclude the pleasures of eating and drinking and kindred functions from the perfect life ; only they must not presume to rule it." (A System of Ethics, pp. 278—79 ).

### (3) Reconciliation of Egoism with Altruism :

**Self-perfection** is, therefore, the ultimate end of our life—the ultimate good for us. But this ultimate good is not individual, but *personal*, i. e. *common*. For in so far as a man is a person or a rational being, he is a



member of the community of spirits. "A perfect human life is an end in itself. But it is at the same time a part and hence, a means of a larger whole, a national life, a sphere of civilization." One man differs from another in respect of his individuality, but stands on a common ground with others in respect of his personality. Man is universal in so far as he is rational ; he is particular and isolated in so far as he is sentient. But we have found that the essence and the guiding principle of our life is *reason*. So that the ultimate good for man must be a good which satisfies and realises both the sides of man—both his reason and sensibility ; and thus, must be *rational*, i. e. universal, and *sentient*, i. e. individual at the same time. From this it is evident that the *Summum Bonum* or the supreme good cannot be simply universal, or simply particular or individual—simply rational, or simply sentient. That the supreme good is the *common good* can be proved in another way : in so far as man is rational or universal, he is "an end to himself" and not a means to anything else, for if he were a means to anything else, he would be a conditioned being and therefore *merely* limited and particular. But if the end or good is particular, then what is good for one man cannot be good for another man, and the realisation of one man's good will require the non-fulfilment of another man's. Thus a man will not be an end to himself. Hence the famous dictum of Hegel—"Be a person and respect others as persons"—i. e. "subject your own clamant individuality to your abiding rational personality." Or to express it in the words of Shakespeare ;—

“To thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

In this way egoism and altruism—the interests of the individual and the interests of others—are finally and for ever reconciled. The nut, that both rationalism and hedonism found so hard to crack, is now found to be soft and plastic enough for being re-constructed into a new whole embracing within itself all the hard and jarring elements in perfect harmony with one another.

#### (4) **Reconciliation of Rationalism with Hedonism :**

How does, then, this theory reconcile Rationalism with Hedonism—the ethics of self-sacrifice with the ethics of self-satisfaction? In this way : It is a well-known fact that a constant war goes on in human nature between the higher or the rational self and the lower or the sentient self—between reason and passions. Now it is the object of our moral life to overcome this strife gradually. But we can overcome it by subordinating the lower self to the higher—by bringing the passions into harmony with reason. This implies that the lower self must die as a separate and independent self, and somehow reconcile itself with the higher. This does not imply that it will altogether disappear ; it will be allowed to exist in so far as it will help the realisation of the higher self,—it will be the true instrument to the development of the higher self. We should sacrifice those passions and desires which hinder, and satisfy those

which help, the realisation and perfection of the rational self. In other words, we should sacrifice our selfish good to the universal good. This is the meaning of self-sacrifice, and of Hegel's famous saying—"die to live".

The doctrine of Perfectionism not only enjoins self-sacrifice, but also self-satisfaction. As we have found, it is the reconciliation of Rationalism and Hedonism. Self-sacrifice does not really imply the total extinction of the lower self,—of the passions and desires ; the lower self must exist, because, otherwise the higher self cannot work and realise itself. So that the legitimate satisfaction of the lower self is a necessary condition of the fulfilment of the higher self. The realisation of the lower self is as necessary as that of the higher self. The realisation of the total self includes the realisation of both the higher and the lower self, only that the realisation of the last two must be harmonious. But the legitimate satisfaction of the lower self,—of appetites, passions and desires—is followed by pleasure. Hence the satisfaction of the total self necessarily includes pleasure. But this kind of pleasure should be distinguished from the pleasure which arises out of the satisfaction of the sensuous impulses regarded *as wholly distinct and isolated from reason*. The hedonistic element involved in the fulfilment of the total self should rather be called *happiness* ( or rather *blessedness* ) as distinguished from pleasure as a transitory state. Happiness is not pleasure, or the sum of pleasures, but their harmony or system. It is a permanent state arising out

of the satisfaction of all the interests of the self, not a particular aspect of it ; it accompanies the realisation of the total self. ( See, Prof. Dewey's Psychology, p, 293 ; and also pp 73—75 of this Book ). Happiness is, in a word, the synthesis of pleasures. As our moral life is an organic synthesis of appetites, passions and desires, so happiness, its necessary accompaniment, is the organic synthesis of all the pleasures that arise out of the satisfaction of those appetites, passions, and desires. "The life of personality is, in its very essence, a completely satisfying life."

"Resolve to be thyself, and know, that, he  
Who finds himself, loses his misery."

### Conception of the supreme good as propounded in the Upanishads .

Many thousand years ago the Indian sages taught an ethical doctrine in the *Upanishads* bearing closest resemblance to the foregoing. Of course, as interpreted by Sankara, it appears to be analogous to pure asceticism as taught by Kant in his "Critique of Practical Reason", and also by Kapil in his Sankhya Philosophy. I have already remarked, there are other interpretations, particularly those as offered by Rámánuja and Nimbarka, and as accepted and preached by the great religious teacher Chaitanya of Nadia, which clearly point to the fact that the ethics taught in the Upanishads is, after all, *eudæmonistic*. To remove any misconception it seems desirable to briefly state the metaphysical basis of such eudæmonism. There is only one ultimate reality, i. e.

*Brahman* or the Infinite Self of which everything else mental or material found in the universe is merely a particular differentiation—a partial manifestation or reproduction. But this particular differentiation is eternal and unchangeable. Of course everything has a history—everything passes through a course of changes ; but this history or course of changes, taken as a whole, remains eternally unchangeable. In this sense every thing whether mental or material remains eternally *distinct* from the Infinite self, though at the same time eternally related to Him. Or in other words, the finite and the Infinite, the relative and the Absolute, are eternal *correlatives*, and therefore, neither of them can exist apart from the other. From this it is evident that *Brahman* is an *organic* whole which contains within Himself all objects, relating them with one another and with Himself without, at the same time, annulling their distinction. Hence every thing, even a stock or a stone, is a *jiba*, i.e. a *person* from a particular point of view ; because the whole—the Infinite Self—is present in each, as the whole mind of a man is present in each of his mental states, in a unique manner. Man is thus also *person* and the Infinite Self is also present in him in a unique manner, i. e. He also works in him under some conditions or limitations, viz, those imposed by his physical organism ; and this working of the Infinite self under an eternally definite and unique set of conditions constitutes the life-history of a man. Thus human life contains both universal and particular elements—reason and sensibility—the former being the Infinite self working in him and the latter

is supplied by his physical organism. Hence the supreme good for man is neither simply altruistic or universal, nor simply egoistic or particular ; it is the synthesis of both. The supreme good is the *eudæmonia* which satisfies both the rational and physical sides of man. The hedonism as taught in the *Sanhitas* and *Brahmanas*, and the rituals by means of which pleasure is attained here or hereafter are emphatically condemned. "But these sacrifices with their ritual and its eighteen parts," says the *Mundaka Upanishad*, "are frail boats indeed ; and they that rejoice in sacrifice as the best of things, in their infatuation, shall pass on again to decay and death." Again, we find in the same : "In their infatuation they think that the revealed rites and works for the public good are the best and highest thing, and fail to find the other thing that is higher and better still". Thus the true good is carefully distinguished from the merely pleasant. In the *Kathopanishad* we meet with the following : "The good is one thing, the pleasurable another. Both these engage a man, though the ends are diverse. Of these, it is well with him that takes the good, and he that chooses the pleasurable fails of his purpose." Again, "both the good and the pleasurable present themselves to man ; and the wise man goes round about them both and distinguishes between them. The sage prefers the good to the pleasurable ; the unwise man chooses the pleasurable that he may get and keep."

What then is this good that is distinguished from the pleasurable ? It consists in seeking *Brahman*, the Infinite Self, the soul of all souls, and in knowing Him.

“Far apart,” says the *Katha*, “are these diverse and diverging paths, the path of illusion and the path of knowledge. I know thee, Nachiketas, that thou art a seeker of knowledge, for all these various pleasures that I proposed have not distracted thee.” Again, “the good, the Self (i. e. the Infinite Self) is not reached by many that they should hear it, &c. &c.” It is, therefore, the bounden and supreme duty of man to know Him and to be united to Him, all other duties being regarded as secondary to and derived from it. Hence the ultimate criterion or standard of right is this absolute standpoint—this consciousness of unity of the human soul with the Divine. Consequently the “individuality” of man—his selfish passions and desires—should be subordinated to and reconciled with his “personality”—his infinite rational self; his passional or lower self should be made the vehicle of the realisation of his rational or higher self—man as a finite being should be united to *Brahman* as the Infinite Being. Hence the moral value of an action is determined and measured by the degree of such union and reconciliation that is reached through it.

**Egoism and Altruism** :—Such conception of the supreme good easily reconciles egoism with altruism. The ego, regarded by itself, is a mere abstraction; its value and even its reality consist in its union with the Absolute Self. So that the true good is *personal* or *common*, i. e. the good for each is also the good for all. “He who sees all things in the Self,” says the *Isopani-shad*, “and the Self in all things, hence hates no body.” Again, we find the followidg in the *Brihadaranyaka*

*Upanishad* : “A husband is loved, not for love of the husband, but the husband is loved for love of the Self that is one within us all, A wife is loved, not for love of the wife, but a wife is loved for love of the Self. \* \* \* Wealth is loved, not for love of wealth, but wealth is loved for love of the Self. \* \* \* Living things are loved, not for love of the living things, but for love of the Self. The world is loved, not for love of the world, but the world is loved for love of the Self that is one in all things.” All these evidently show that the good is conceived from the standpoint of the Absolute, not from that of the individual.

**Hedonism and Rationalism** :—The above quotations plainly show also that we should not love and seek anything mundane for our own sake, i. e. as means to our own selfish end, but for the sake of the Absolute, i. e. as means to the supreme end—the end by attaining which we attain the Absolute who is one in all things. Or in other words. we are not enjoined to renounce the world, or cut off all connections with other things, thereby suppressing all passions and desires instead of satisfying their legitimate claims ; nor are we enjoined to be selfish and base, to engage ourselves always in securing individual pleasures ; but to live a life which is at once individual and social, human and divine. As it is inculcated elsewhere, we should be a householder and perform all actions from the sense of our duty toward *Brahman*, which, of course, includes all the duties towards self and others. A life, thus conceived of, is not a life of pure reason or contemplation,



nor a life of pure pleasure-seeking ; but a life of *action* in which we perform all our duties toward our own selves, toward others and lastly toward *Brahman*, and enjoy all pleasures resulting therefrom, and thereby gradually attain that type of character which is the consummation or perfection of our life. This consummated life is at once the most rational and the most happy. "When all things have become the wise man's self, where is illusion and where is sorrow to him who sees unity ?" ( *Isopanishad* ). Again, "the wise see within their own heart the one thing that perishes not in all things that perish ; the one thing that gives light in all things that have no light ; the one being that gives the recompense to many ; and *peace eternal* is for them and not for others." ( *Kathopanishad* ). This brings about the final reconciliation between Hedonism and Rationalism.

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## **Chapter VII.**

### **The seat of authority in morals.**

As we have found, the sense of moral obligation is a necessary accompaniment of the moral judgment. When we recognise an action to be right or wrong, good or bad, we feel a sense of obligation to do and approve the former, and to avoid and disapprove the latter. Similarly, when we recognise a moral law or a moral ideal we feel bound to obey and act up to it. What is the source of such a sense of obligation or constraint that accompanies all moral recognition? To what is such an obligation due? Or in other words, what is the seat of authority in morals—authority to which such an obligation is due? Why should we obey the moral law, or guide our life in accordance with the moral ideal? Why should we do the right and avoid the wrong, and not the opposite? These questions naturally suggest themselves when we consider either a moral judgment or a moral law or a moral ideal. We should, therefore, try to answer them properly before we proceed to consider the facts of our concrete moral life.

To answer all these questions we should take into consideration what is the nature of the law that constrains us to obey it; what precisely it is that imposes the law upon us irrespective of our individual will and assent. For this purpose we should refer to the various theories of the moral standard and examine them care-

fully in order to arrive at that conception of authority which is most consistent with the nature of morality.

**1. The Rigoristic view:—***a) External law as the seat of moral authority:—*When the moral law is regarded as entirely external, as coming solely from an external authority such as a king, a priest, or even God regarded simply *as an external power*, obedience to such a law being secured under compulsion or by the distribution of reward or under the penalty of punishment, the very essence of morality, which consists in free obedience to a law, disappears; and the “must” is identified with “ought,” the involuntary with the voluntary, the physical with the moral. So that such a law cannot be regarded as the real seat of moral authority.

*(b) Internal law as the seat of moral authority:—*When the moral law is conceived of as internal, as the law of Moral Sense or Conscience, morality is supposed to consist in obedience to such a law; and the moral authority is also, therefore, supposed to be seated in it. Dr. Martineau, the greatest modern exponent of intuitionism, maintains: the moral authority is not merely *subjective*, i. e. wielded by *myself over myself*—a mere subjective feeling, as is held to be so by Bentham; “the notion of “ought” or “moral obligation” does not merely import that there exists in the mind of a person judging a specific emotion, nor that certain rules of conduct are supported by penalties which will follow on their violation,” but that “the authority is *objective*; that is, that what I judge ‘right’ or what ‘ought to be,’ must, unless I am in error, be

thought to be so by all rational beings who judge truly of the matter." But it means something more. "It means the discernment of something *higher than we*, having claims on our *self*, therefore no mere part of it." But as only a *person* can be higher than *another person*, that something must be a person like ourselves, but of "greater, higher, and deeper insight." "If it be true that over a free and living person nothing short of a free and living person can have higher authority, then is it certain that a 'subjective' conscience is impossible. The faculty is more than part and parcel of myself; it is the communion of God's life. Here we encounter an 'objective' authority." (Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, pp. 103-5).

Thus, according to Dr. Martineau, the seat of moral authority is conscience, a special Faculty or Sense through which God speaks to us and bids us do the right and avoid the wrong. But, as we have found, (see, above, chap. I. pp. 13-14), conscience being a unique and unanalysable faculty sitting over and above all other faculties and being capable of acting irrespective of them, it is still external to our self, and its law or command is still an external law or command, and therefore cannot be regarded as the true seat of moral authority. (See also Bk. I, chap. VII).

(c) **Practical Reason as the seat of moral authority** :—Though Butler identifies conscience with reason, yet he is not clear as to whether reason as understood by him is the rational self or a special and inexplicable faculty. (See, Bk. I, chap. VII). Kant's

theory of obligation is nearer the mark. Morality, according to him, is free obedience to the moral law. But why should we obey the law—where does its authority lie? Kant answers that it lies in the very nature of the law. The Moral law is the law of the *Practical Reason*. In the moral sphere man is both the law-giver and the law-abider—both the king and the subject. This property by virtue of which man is a law to himself is called *autonomy*. This autonomy of the will which is the only source of the moral law, and of all duties, i. e. of all moral imperatives, unconditionally commands us to do what is right and avoid what is wrong. It is the sole principle of moral obligation and therefore the true seat of moral authority.

But the *Practical Reason*, as understood by Kant, is still an abstract principle. Hence the moral law which comes from it is likewise abstract or formal : the law of the Practical Reason is not the law of the rational self—the total self of man. It is still a unique and inexplicable faculty and is, thus, external to the self. Hence it cannot be regarded as the true seat of moral authority. ( see Book I, Chap. VII—*Moral Reason* ).

**II. The Hedonistic View** :—Hedonism in general has tried to explain the sense of moral obligation as the product of some external constraints, viz. the so-called “sanctions” of morality, and thus has described only how our sense of obligation has developed in course of time, but not the real meaning and justification of the idea itself. It is maintained by Dr. Bain, Mill and Spencer that the element of “coerciveness” which is involved

in the consciousness of obligation arises from our constant subjection to some external "controls" or "sanctions". "Because man learned his duty under the discipline of political, religious and social authorities, it is thought that fear of punishment is the real meaning of obligation." ( see Book I, Chap. VII,—*Hedonistic view*; and also Chap. IV, pp. 58-61, and Chap. V, pp. 101-5 ). But it is easy to see that this foreign birth of the consciousness of moral obligation divests it of all its meaning and justification. To do good from fear of the consequences is no morality at all. Again, it is not moral to submit to mere superior power. The sense of obligation cannot, then, be justified by tracing it to merely external constraints, and the seat of moral authority cannot be supposed to lie in them. In a word, hedonism has completely failed to account for the origin of moral authority. ( For further criticism of hedonistic view, see also the chapters mentioned above ).

With Sir Leslie Stephen " 'moral law are statements of external conditions of social welfare'; and their 'authority', as felt, depends upon the agent having 'certain instincts', viz., a reverence for social welfare. Without this he may obey extrinsic interest or coercion, but owns no moral authority." ( Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, p. 115 ). He also maintains, as we have found, the individual being an integral part of society, the relation between him and the society is *organic* one. So that the good for all is also the good for each—the social welfare is also the individual welfare. Consequently the consciousness of the social welfare is the real seat of moral

authority. No doubt this is the true view so far as it goes. But he has marred its real significance : for his conception of society as an organism is defective—it is not better than a metaphor. ( see Chap. V, pp. 133-35 ). As Dr. Martineau has truly remarked : “he only applies it far enough to explain the growth of social affections parallel with the personal instincts of self-conservation, and capable of transcending them ; and leaves the question between them, in case of conflict, to be one of *strength alone*,—without *other authority* to decide the alternative between self-preservation and self-sacrifice.”

According to Prof. Alexander, obligation is “that relation in which the single part of the order stands to the whole order, when it is confronted by the whole : whether we are considering the relations of a man's act to the whole of his own character, or of a single individual to the institutions of society.” “Obligation, therefore, is generically on a level with the relation between the parts of a vegetable or animal organism and the whole. It is what corresponds in human affairs to the necessity under which an organism lies of acting in a certain manner in order to conform to its type.” ( *Moral Order and Progress*, p. 142 ). Thus, the seat of moral authority lies in the whole regarded either as the whole character or the whole society. This is certainly true if the relation between the individual and society can be shown to be *really organic*. The organism of human society is certainly not analogous to a vegetable or animal organism, even though there are some points of resemblance between them. ( See Chap. V, pp. 133—35 ). If it were

really so, an agent's action in obedience to the laws of society would not be free but as necessary as a physical event that takes place in obedience to a law of nature. Any obligation felt in such an action would not be free obedience but external compulsion ; "ought" would be reduced to "must". For in the vegetable or animal organism the parts live for the whole and *not vice versa* ; but in the social organism both the parts and the whole live for one another—here the relation is completely reciprocal and one of freedom. Therefore the social organism as understood by him cannot be regarded as the seat of moral authority.

III. **The Endæmonistic view** :—The above considerations evidently show that the true seat of moral authority cannot be anything *external*. It should lie in the ultimate nature of man as man, i. e. in his *personality*. Only a *person* can be the real source of moral obligation. No external authority or power can impose a law upon him which he is *morally* bound to obey. In this connection Prof. Green's view may be summarised with advantage : "It is the very essence of moral duty to be imposed by a man on himself. The moral duty to obey a positive law, whether a law of the State or of the Church, is imposed not by the author or enforcer of the positive law, but by that spirit of man—not less divine because the spirit of man—which sets before him the ideal of a perfect life and pronounces obedience to the positive law to be necessary to its realisation." ( *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 354 ). To understand the real significance of this, we should understand the real



significance of the self or personality of man. "A man's own 'Self' is not to be understood here as a detached finite *individuality*, that could be what it is in presence of its mere numerical repetitions : that he has a *Self* at all, and knows it, is possible simply because the universe has an Absolute Self, or 'self-conditioning and self-distinguishing mind,' communicates itself to the human being—the infinite to the finite spirit,—and constitutes thereby the knowledge of moral law as the expression, under temporal conditions, of an eternal perfection. A man, therefore, is 'a law unto himself,' not by autonomy of the individual, but by 'self-communication of the infinite spirit to the soul : and the law itself, 'the idea of an absolute *should be*,' is authoritative with the conscience, because it is a deliverance of the eternal perfection to a mind that has to grow and is imposed, therefore, by the infinite upon the finite." ( See *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p 106 ). This view agrees also with the view that regards the seat of moral authority as lying in society conceived as an organisation of *rational* beings or persons. Man, as a person, as a rational being, as the finite expression of the Absolute Spirit, is necessarily a *social* being : so that the good of society is also the good of the individual and *vice versa*. The moral law, which is also the law of society, necessarily issues from his personality—from the Absolute Self expressing and realising itself in and through him. Hence the true and ultimate seat of moral authority is the Absolute Self in man working out its realisation under finite conditions.

This theory also reconciles the preceding theories. On the one hand, it agrees with intuitionism in holding that the true seat of moral authority is *internal* ; but it also differs from the latter in that this internal seat is not conscience understood as a unique and inexplicable faculty having no *organic* relation to the self, nor even reason understood as an empty and formal principle excluding the sense. It agrees, on the other hand, with hedonism in holding that the seat of moral authority is *society* ; but differs from the latter in that the society is not a merely mechanical aggregate of individuals, nor an organism like a vegetable or animal organism. The moral law is *internal* in the sense that it is the law of the Absolute Self in us in accordance with which our passions and desires are organised into a systematic world of moral experience—in accordance with which our moral life is built up and regulated ; it is the law of the Higher Self imposed upon the Lower Self. Thus, “the law of the life of a rational being must be autonomy ; moral self-realisation is ‘realisation of self by self.’ The law of nature’s life is heteronomy ; it is part of a larger system, and comes under the law of that system. But a rational being is an end-in-himself, and can find nowhere save in his own nature the law of his life. This is the prerogative of reason—to legislate for itself, to be at once sovereign and subject in the kingdom of morality, as it is at once teacher and scholar in the school of wisdom.” ( Prof. J. Seth, *Study of Ethical Principles*, p. 214 ). The law is, at the same time, *external—social* in the sense that the society is really a *rational* organi-

sation of which each individual is an integral or essential member, so that the law of the whole is also the law of the parts or units, and *vice versa* : the Absolute Self, the presence of which in each of us makes all of us *persons*, binds us together as members of an organised whole called society, thus making the law that is internal to each as a person also external to each as an individual. In a word, the law which is the seat of moral authority is both *internal* and *external*, *individual* and *social* at the same time. ( See, above, chap. VI ).

What, then, is the character of moral authority which is wielded by the law of the Absolute Self or Reason as popularly called, over the finite self ? "The inner demand is *absolute*, 'a categorical imperative.' Its unyielding 'thou shalt' is the voice of the ideal to the actual man ; and the ideal admits of no concession, no 'give and take,' no compromise with the actual. This demand of the rational and ideal self is not to be misinterpreted, as if its absoluteness meant the annihilation of feeling or nature. The demand is for such a perfect mastery of the impulsive and sentient, or natural self, that in it the true self, which is fundamentally rational, may be realised ; that it may be the rational or human, and not the merely sentient or animal self, that *lives*. What produces the constant contradiction between ideal and attainment is not the presence of feeling as a surd that cannot be eliminated ; it is that the harmony of a life in which feeling is subdued to reason must become ever more perfect, the life of the true self must become ever more complete as moral progress continues." ( Ibid, p. 216 ).

## Chapter viii.

### Divergence of moral opinions.

The cause of the divergence of moral opinions has been accounted for differently by the different schools of ethical writers. The intuitionists deny that the divergence is due to any exception to the universality of the moral laws or the intuitions of conscience ; and they, therefore, try to explain it in a different way. ( See, Bk. I, chap. VII, *Diversity of moral judgments* ). The hedonists, on the other hand, find in such divergence a fatal defect of the intuitive theory of morals. If the intuitions of conscience, as they contend, are infallible, and the moral laws are universal, the divergence of moral opinions remains inexplicable. They therefore maintain that as the existence of such divergence cannot be denied, it must be accounted for, and it can be satisfactorily accounted for only by the hedonistic theory that the so-called moral laws are not innate, but generalisations from experience ; that their binding force rests entirely on their usefulness for both the individual and the society ; but that this usefulness varying with the changing circumstances of the people at different times and ages, which necessitate changes in their needs, their ideas of expediency and even their capacities for experience of pleasure and pain, the moral laws themselves vary entirely or partly in course of times and ages, causing the divergence of moral opinions.

But the causes of the divergence as explained by the intuitionists and the hedonists seem to be inadequate. If we hold with the intuitionists that conscience is a unique and inexplicable faculty all-perfect and fully-developed from the beginning, waiving all other difficulties, the most serious difficulty that the moral laws and the moral intuitions themselves conflict with one another remains still inexplicable. Again, if we hold with the hedonists that the moral laws are essentially variable, because they are based upon variable experiences of the individual and the race, we deny the striking fact that "the extent and force of *agreement*" are far greater than those of diversity among those laws and intuitions. ( See, above, chap. VII, the passages quoted from Janet's *Theory of Morals*, under the heading—*Diversity of moral judgments* ; and also pp. 309—352 of the same Book, as well as Dr. Martineau's *Study of Religion*, vol. II, chap. I ). The real cause of the divergence seems to be this : The *moral* self is not all-perfect and fully-developed from the beginning ; it undergoes a process of development in course of which it gradually reveals and applies higher and higher moral principles in order to construct the systematised world of morality in which it lives, moves and has its being, out of the chaotic mass of facts such as the social relations and institutions, &c. Thus, in the gradual construction of the moral world, the moral self does not apply the same moral principles in all the stages. In each stage it applies a particular principle or ideal of construction, or views the moral facts from a particular

standpoint. This is not only true of the moral self of the individual, but also of the race. Hence a particular individual would estimate the moral value of actions from different standpoints, lower and higher, at different stages of his moral life ; and so, different individuals having attained different stages of moral evolution would judge the same action from different standpoints. Such is true also of different races in the same age and also in different ages. Thus some would judge the moral worth of an action by reference to an inexplicable moral faculty such as Moral Sense or Conscience ; others by referring it to happiness personal or social ; and others, again, by reference to the perfection of human nature. These diverse modes of moral judgment adopted by different peoples and different races at the same time or at different times are sufficient to account for the divergence of moral opinions as respects the moral values of actions. These also explain the divergence as respects the scope and meaning of the moral laws. The moral laws, as we have found, are ultimately but general rules of action that are deduced from the idea of the moral standard ; and thus, the nature of such a standard determines the scope and meaning of them. If the standard is personal happiness, the scope and meaning of the moral laws will be understood in one way ; if it is social happiness, they will be understood in a different way ; and finally, if it is the perfection of human nature, they will be understood in a still more different way. Thus, an egoistic hedonist, who understands the scope and meaning of the moral law "*Thou*

*shall not steal*" in a particular way, will not consider those acts of stealing that are pleasant to him as coming under the scope and meaning of the law ; whereas an utilitarian hedonist will understand them in a different way ; so also a perfectionist ; and both will consider those acts as coming unquestionably under the law. Again, that act of stealing which is conducive to the happiness or efficiency of society will be regarded right by the utilitarians, as, for instance, was done by the ancient Spartans ; while it will be condemned by the intuitionists and the perfectionists. In this way it can be easily shown that the different ethical schools judging actions from different standpoints will understand the scope and meaning of the moral laws differently. Yet it cannot be denied that in the main there is some sort of *agreement* with regard to moral opinions, though there is also a great deal of divergence at all times and in all ages among all people and race. The still greater cause of divergence seems to be that even when people agree with regard to the scope and meaning of the moral laws they considerably differ as to their application to concrete cases. In short, the real cause of both the agreement and divergence lies in the nature of the moral life itself, which is a *unity-in-difference*—a harmonisation of conflicting principles—a systematisation of diverse and jarring elements.

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## Chapter ix.

### Moral Sentiments.

I. **Meaning of Sentiment** : The sentiments are the higher forms of developed feeling than the emotions. They differ from the emotions in being "more ideal and spiritual." "They are 'fuller of ideas' and some of them are found to be complex forms of feeling that arise only in the presence of "ideals" or constructions of imagination and thought which the mind holds up to itself as types or patterns of what is not, but ought to be." ( Prof. Ladd, *Primer of Psychology*, pp. 182—83 ). These types or patterns are of three kinds :—the *ideal of Truth*, the *ideal of Beauty* and the *ideal of Goodness*. The contemplation of each of these ideals gives rise to a unique kind of sentiment called, respectively, the *intellectual or logical*, the *aesthetic* and the *ethical or moral*.

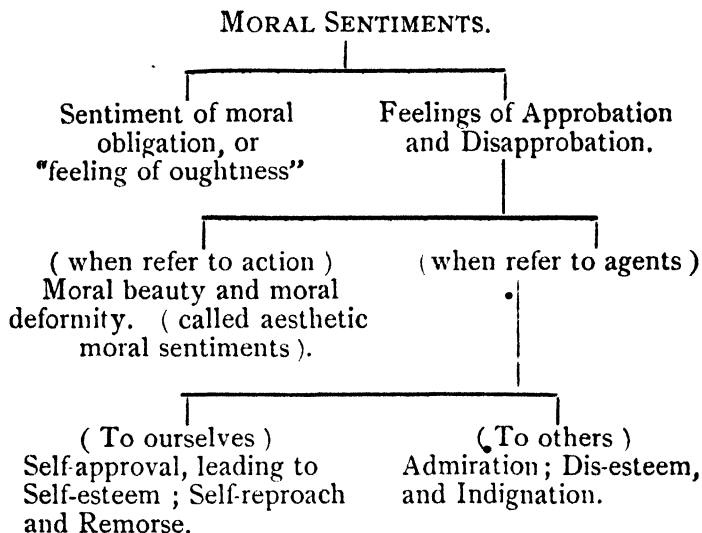
II. **Characteristics of the Moral Sentiments** :—As we have just now found, the moral sentiment is a unique kind of feeling that arises out of the contemplation of the moral ideal or the ideal of rightness or goodness. As a *rational* agent man is always guided, consciously or unconsciously, by the idea of the ultimate *end* of conduct or the ideal of the moral life ; and feels that his actual conduct or moral life falls always far short of that end or ideal : hence there is a constant longing deeply rooted in his nature for gradu-



ally adjusting his conduct to that end, i. e. making it more and more harmonious with the *best type* of conduct, or for making his actual moral life more and more progressive towards the ideal, i. e. the perfect moral life. This feeling and longing or thirst after perfection, constitutes the *moral sentiment*.

But there are some other feelings directly or indirectly connected with the moral sentiment that are also commonly called moral sentiments ; but really, some of them are feelings, others are affections and emotions accompanying, harmonising with, animating, enforcing moral judgments in which the agreement or disagreement of conduct with the moral ideal, or the nature of the character of the agent acting up to or violating such an ideal, is described. Thus, there is a variety of moral sentiments which are of different psychological character and have two distinct but correlated sources. The true moral sentiment arises, as we have found, directly from the contemplation of the Good or the moral *Ideal* ; and it is, therefore, an *abstract, impersonal, and disinterested* emotive state ; whereas there are other ethical feelings that accompany or follow upon the different kinds of moral judgments, in obedience to the general psychological law that all cognitive activities are accompanied or followed by feelings.

**III. Classification of the moral sentiments :—** The moral sentiments may be classified in the way as represented in the following table :—



(a) **The sentiment of moral obligation or the “feeling of oughtness”** :—This sentiment is directly excited by the contemplation of the moral ideal or the idea of right or good. Whenever we think of the moral ideal we feel a sense of obligation to realise it or act up to it in our conduct. The idea of the moral ideal is not a merely *passive* idea like the idea of the beautiful, giving rise to a mere passive enjoyment, but contains an *active* element also which exhibits itself in a feeling that is itself a *motive force*, impelling us to attain the ideal in our life and action.

(b) **The feelings of Approbation and Disapprobation** :—These feelings are excited by actions that are recognised as right or good and wrong or bad.

Whenever we recognise an action as good or right, we approve of it and experience a feeling of pleasure called the feeling of *Approbation*; and when we recognise an action as wrong or bad, we disapprove of it and have a feeling of pain called the feeling of *Disapprobation*. These feelings of Approbation and Disapprobation may refer to *actions* or *agents*. When they refer to actions, we have—

(i) **The æsthetic moral sentiments**, which exhibit themselves in the forms of the feelings of *Moral Beauty* and *Moral Deformity*. When we approve of an action because of its goodness or rightness we experience a kind of beauty in it; and when we disapprove of it by reason of its badness or wrongness we feel a kind of deformity in it. This beauty and deformity attached to the right and the wrong actions excite feelings in us that resemble the feelings excited by beautiful and ugly objects. ( See, above, Chap. VII—Moral Sense ).

Again, when the feelings of Approbation and Disapprobation refer to ourselves as agents, we have—

(ii) **The feelings of Self-approval or Self-esteem, and of Self-reproach and Remorse**, which arise from the consciousness that we have done right or wrong, good or bad. (1) When our action is right or good, we not only approve of it, but also approve of the character or the self which is its ultimate source. And the feeling following upon such approval is always pleasurable and is called the feeling of *Self-approval* or *Self-approbation* or *Self-satisfaction*. The experience of this feeling is followed by peace of mind

and is often described as the "testimony of a good conscience, meaning an approving conscience". This feeling, when frequently experienced as the result of frequent performances of right or good actions, leads to the sentiment of *Self-esteem* or *Self-respect*. Thus this sentiment is the necessary accompaniment of virtue or the good habits of will and action. Self-esteem is, therefore, an essential feature of a soundly-working moral nature. It is wholly distinct from *Pride* which is immoral, and is in full harmony with conscience. It is always allied to *Humility* which is so characteristic of all healthy moral nature. The loss of Self-esteem, thus indicates a moral disorder. The degeneration of moral nature is inevitably followed by the loss of Self-esteem ; and when the degeneration is very great, there is the total disappearance of this sentiment, indicating a nature which is scarcely above that of the brute.

(2) When, on the other hand, our action is wrong or bad, we not only disapprove of it, but also disapprove of the character or the self of which it is the issue. And the feeling resulting from such disapproval is always painful and is called the feeling of *Self-reproach* or *Self-condemnation* or *Self-dissatisfaction*. The experience of this feeling is followed by a great uneasiness of mind and often called "the accusation of an evil conscience". This feeling, in its more active form, passes into *Shame* and shame, intensified, is *Remorse* or *Contrition*. Remorse is commonly termed the pang or sting of conscience ; it is very tormenting and exercises a great influence upon our moral nature by restraining us from continuance in

immorality. But it may go beyond our personal control and pass into recklessness.

Remorse or contrition should be carefully distinguished from *Humiliation* or *Attrition*. Both of these two classes of feeling follow upon wrong-doing ; but they must not be confounded with each other. Remorse is a moral sentiment, whereas humiliation is immoral : the one is a mark of healthy moral nature and allied to humility ; the other indicates more or less a moral disorder and is allied to pride,—it is merely the mortification of wounded pride—the feeling that our action will bring disgrace upon us. This distinction becomes manifest when we consider their effects upon the moral nature. Remorse purifies our soul by (1) preventing us from doing similar wrong, and (2) elevating the soul to the height from which it has fallen, or to a still greater height, as is found in those instances of conversion in which men sunk lowest into the depth of immorality are found to suddenly begin to live a far more austere and elevated life ; whereas attrition sinks a man lower into the depth of immorality.

Hence : just as the loss of Self-esteem is indicative of a moral disorder, so is the loss of Remorse. A man, whom the pang of conscience has ceased to torment, is a *morally* dead man. The sinners to whom wrong-doing has become a confirmed habit have ceased to feel the accusation of conscience, or the torment of Remorse ; to them wrong-doing is as pleasant as right-doing is to an honest man. This does not, of course, imply that they have lost their moral nature altogether ; that is

impossible for men as *rational* beings : this simply implies that their moral nature has become dormant and may be roused at a single animating call, as is the case with all converts.

When the feelings of Approbation and Disapprobation refer to other persons as agents, we have—

(iii) **The feelings of Admiration and of Disesteem and Indignation**, which arise from the consciousness that other persons have done right or wrong, good or bad. When we approve the action of other persons as being right or good, we have the feeling of approbation which, together with the attendant feeling of the beautiful gives rise to the feeling of *Admiration* for them. When we disapprove of the actions, the consequent feeling of disapprobation and the attendant feeling of the ugly gives birth to the feeling of *Disesteem* or *Disrespect* for them, and also rouses the feeling of *Indignation*. Frequent admiration of a person leads to a judgment of *general approval* of his character attended by *love* and *trust*. Similarly, frequent disrespect to a person is attended by *dislike* and *distrust*.

**IV. Relation of the moral sentiments to the moral judgments** :—The nature of the relation between the moral sentiments and the moral judgments has been a matter of much dispute. Two rival schools have been carrying on the controversy that has been raised round it, the one of which tending to elevate into special prominence the claims of feelings, and the other the claims of reason. (1) Thus, the Moral Sense or Æsthetic school maintains that actions excite some

feelings in us through which we discern and measure their moral qualities, just as we discern the beauty and deformity of objects through the feelings excited by them, or the secondary qualities of objects through the sensations produced by them. The hedonists in general hold a similar view. Thus, with Hume the agreeable or disagreeable feeling spontaneously excited by actions is the only measure of their rightness or wrongness. With Mill conscience is an emotion "encrusted over with collateral associations". With Dr. Bain also conscience, at least in its early stage, is an emotion evolved from such feelings as fear, hope, love, sympathy, &c.

(2) The intuitionists in general, on the other hand, maintain that "Moral Sentiments being essentially dependent on the moral judgments, rise spontaneously along with these judgments, and in accordance with them. . . . . This law of the rise of moral sentiments, by which they depend upon preceding judgments, makes the moral sentiment of no value as a standard for deciding the moral character of actions. Everything here depends upon the validity of the moral judgment with which they have taken their rise. A sentiment of self-satisfaction will attend a judgment of self-approbation, whether that judgment be correct or not. The sole test of the moral value of the sentimental experience is found in the test of the moral quality of personal actions—clear recognition of moral law." ( Dr. Calderwood, *Handbook of Moral Philosophy*, pp. 206-7 ). The moral feeling, according to Kant, is "the susceptibility for pleasure or displeasure merely from the consciousness of the agree-

ment or disagreement of our action with the law of duty". The moral sentiments, thus, *follow* the moral judgments in which such agreement or disagreement is expressed, and do not, therefore, *precede* them.

**Criticism** :—The intuitive, hedonistic and the æsthetic theories are all based upon an imperfect and one-sided view of moral consciousness. Moral consciousness, as we have found, ( see, above, Chap. V ), is a complex phenomenon : the moral judgment and the moral sentiment are only two elements involved in it ; they are, therefore, interrelated and inseparable from each other. There cannot be a moral judgment which does not involve a moral sentiment ; and similarly, there cannot be a moral sentiment which is not connected with a moral judgment. The moral judgment as an intellectual activity must have an emotive tone in obedience to the general psychological law that every mental activity involves an element of feeling. Likewise, a sentiment, which is by itself *unqualified*, acquires a moral quality only from the moral judgment with which it is connected. Therefore, the phrase "moral sentiments" is inadmissible, if we mean by it "sentiments" which determine the qualities of judgments called moral, inasmuch as, in the first place, they themselves have no quality when separated from such judgments, and in the second place, when so separated they become *abstractions* and therefore *non-entities*. The same is true *mutatis mutandis* of the moral judgments, when separated from the moral sentiments. The constituents of an organic whole are interdependent and co-existent, so that it is



futile to hold that one constituent precedes or entirely depends upon the other. This does not, of course, imply that these factors are present in moral consciousness always in the same proportion and with the same explicitness. As Prof. Sully has truly remarked : "In the crude, early stages of moral development, feeling ( fear, respect for a person ) is uppermost, though even here a subordinate intellectual element is present in the discrimination of a right and a wrong class of actions, e. g. lie from truthful statement. Hence the early stages of moral education are chiefly concerned with fixing for life a habit of swift and unfailing emotive response, e. g. repugnance at, and shrinking from, a lie. A person is not morally developed who has not this irresistible "instinct" to greet and to reject, prior to any process of reflexion, particular sorts of conduct. At the sametime, all the higher stadia of moral development depend, to a large extent, on prolonged and nice processes of reflexion. Only in this way can we reach, for example, a fine and true feeling even for such homely duties as honesty and truth. As modern literature is ever reminding us, morality, instead of being the simple affair we took it to be in childhood, is immensely and perplexingly complex ; and each of us has, to a considerable extent, to evolve a new code of moral maxims to meet the peculiar circumstances of his own individual life." ( *The Human Mind*, Vol. II, p. 169 ).

**V. Origin of the moral sentiments** :—As regarding the nature of the relation between the moral judgments and the moral sentiments, so regarding their

origin there are two rival theories. The intuitionists, on the one hand, maintain that the moral sentiments, like the moral judgments, are unique and inderivative from any *non-moral* feelings. With regard to the sentiment of moral obligation and of moral approbation or disapprobation Prof. Ladd remarks : "This ( i. e. the sentiment of moral obligation ) is a perfectly unique sentiment, is not like any other, and cannot be understood as a development or modification of any other. Its unique character is undoubted, however the sentiment may seem to have arisen. So far as is known, the lower animals have no corresponding form of consciousness. Second : the sentiment of moral approbation seems also to be a distinctive and unique ethical sentiment.....That distinctively moral feeling which arises when, in spite, it may be, of threatened pain and loss, one has done what sound judgment decides ought to be done, is apparently the possession of man alone." ( Primer of Psychology, p. 189 ). The hedonists, on the other hand, deny their original, unique and elementary character and attempt to derive them from *non-moral* feelings. Their doctrine may be summarised as follows :—

The origin of the moral sentiments, like every other complex natural fact presupposes (a) some *materials*, and (b) some *agency* or *agencies* to operate upon those materials in order to combine them into new complexes by transformation and modification.

(a) **The roots of the moral sentiments** :—(i)

The first of these materials or roots out of which the moral sentiments arise, are the *egoistic* feelings. The instinc-

tive impulse of *self-preservation* or *self-love* is the root of all other impulses. The *altruistic* impulses such as sympathy or benevolence, when closely examined into, are found to involve an egoistic element. Thus sympathy may be regarded as an enlargement of the primary feeling for our own good. The feeling of *moral disapprobation* is nothing but a modified and developed form of *egoistic resentment*.

(ii) The second of these materials or roots of the moral sentiments are the *semi-social* or *ego-altruistic* feelings, such as the respect for other's opinion, the love of other's approbation and so forth, which contribute largely to the development of morality, especially in its early stages.

(iii) The ego-altruistic feelings are not, by themselves, sufficient to effect the transition from egoism to altruism. In order that a pure disinterested feeling of morality may grow up in the mind, the *social feelings*, properly so-called, specially the feeling of *sympathy*, that is, a regard for other's welfare for its own sake, must come into play. The essence of morality being a disinterested love of other's welfare, it is evident that there must be an agency or impulse in our nature which is capable of transforming the egoistic feelings which impel us to our own welfare, into altruistic feelings which impel us to other's welfare. And this agency is sympathy. This is further corroborated by the fact that in the case of both the race and the individual the moral sentiments are seen to develop *pari passu* with the development of sympathy.

(b) **The agencies operating upon the ma-**

**terials** :—The development of the moral sentiments out of simpler feelings, depends also upon certain external conditions. Although sympathy can develop certain altruistic feelings out of the egoistic, it cannot generate that sense of *duty* or *obligation* which is a distinctive feature of morality. We may acquire the habit of loving other's welfare, but still the question remains, why shall we be *obliged* to do so ? This sense of obligation can be developed only by some external conditions. These conditions are generally called "*sanctions*" which are nothing but different forms of external authority ( parental, social, political, moral and religious ), backed by punishment and rewards.

**Origin of the moral sentiments** :—These agencies act, in the first instance, upon the egoistic feelings. The child desists from acting in a particular way from the fear of punishment, or acts, in a particular way, to earn the promised reward. In the second place, these agencies give a definite direction to the instinctive workings of his social or semi-social feelings. Thus his love of other's approbation takes on a more comprehensive form of a permanent desire to perform those actions which are uniformly approved of by them. In this way a feeling of reverence for command is now developed in the mind of the child.

The feeling itself of reverence for law thus generated by the educative action of authority undergoes a process of development. This development goes hand in hand with that of the social feelings proper, e. g., affection and sympathy, and of individual reflexion. At the first

stage, this feeling of reverence is restricted to personal commands, such as the commands of parents, teachers, and so forth. But this crude feeling of reverence, unless divested of personal element, does not constitute morality. True morality begins to be understood when the child begins to recognise the validity of such commands. He must begin to know that they are not meant for him alone, but for others as well, and that they are not enacted by a particular governor (e. g. the parent) for any ulterior purpose, except their intrinsic rightness. General customs help the child a great deal to understand this objective character of morality and its independence of any particular personal source.

A still higher stage is reached when the grounds of such general subjection to law begin to be understood. At this stage the personal element of morality gives place to social aspect and all moral rules are recognised as means to the realisation of the social or common good. Sympathy and reflexion play an important part here.

**Criticism** :—The hedonistic account of the origin of the moral sentiments as described above seems to be quite unsatisfactory. It tries to develop them from *non-moral* feelings such as the feeling of self-preservation or self-love, the love of other's approbation, sympathy, &c. Hence hedonism commits here, as elsewhere, the grave mistake that the *moral* can be evolved from the *non moral*, "*should be*" from "*is*" or "*must*". In the second place, it supposes that the agencies that achieve such a wonderful result are some external authorities

social, political, religious, &c. But it forgets that these agencies themselves must first be recognised as operating in conformity with the moral law and thus as having an authority that is morally binding upon us. The instruments through which those agencies work, viz., the fear of punishment and the hope of reward, are themselves devoid of any moral significance. The former may produce a feeling of grief or regret ; but regret is quite distinct from "remorse" which arises from the violation of a moral law or moral authority. The latter may produce a feeling of pleasure or satisfaction ; but this feeling is different from the feeling of self-approbation that arises from acting in accordance with a moral law or authority. In its explanation of the origin of morality, hedonism invariably forgets the most essential condition of evolution that the evolved must not contain anything that was not already in the germ. In the present instance, the moral sentiments contain a peculiarity called *moral* ; and this peculiarity must already be in the germs, viz., the ego-altruistic and altruistic feelings, as well as the fear of punishment and the hope of reward, if the hedonistic explanation be accepted as true. But it is admitted on all hands that these feelings are not really *moral* or contain any *germs* of morality ; they are merely "powerful adjuncts ( or aids ) to the development of genuine moral sentiment."

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## Chapter x.

### The Postulates of Moral judgments.

#### [ **Personality ; Reason ; Self-determination** ]

We have already found what is the nature of moral judgment ; and also what is the nature of the object upon which such a judgment is passed. In discussing the nature of the object we have come to the conclusion that it is ultimately the *person doing* who is the precise object of moral judgment. And in discussing the nature of the subject or principle we have also found ( see, chap. I—VI ) that all theories of the moral standard suppose that a moral being is a *person* ; only that the nature of a person is conceived in different ways. But after reviewing these theories critically one after another we have arrived at the conclusion that the most consistent theory of the moral standard is that which regards a person as essentially *rational* ; which holds, that is to say, that only a rational being is capable of moral censure or approbation ; and that to the rational actions only the moral laws are applicable. The moral judgment thus presupposes a person or a rational being who can become properly, not only its object, but also the source of its subject or principle. Or the whole truth may be expressed in an apparently paradoxical form : that a person is both the *object* and the *subject* of moral judgment. He is the object inasmuch as only the activity of a person who acts from motive is capable of

moral approbation or disapprobation. He is the subject inasmuch as the moral law is a *self-imposed* law—a law that comes from his rational self. Thus *personality* is a postulate, a presupposition of moral judgment. What is, then, meant by personality? The word “*personality*” implies (A) *Reason*, (B) *Self-determination*, (C) *Organic relation to society*.

(A) **Reason** :—A person must be a *rational being*; but a rational being is a *self-conscious* being—a being capable of *reflexion*. Hence personality consists in *self-consciousness or reflexion*. But self-consciousness is a principle of *unity-in-difference*—it is the self’s consciousness of itself as distinguished from, yet related to, the *not-self*—it is therefore the consciousness of unity-in-difference—a consciousness of correlativity of diverse elements. Hence a person is an essential and integral member of the world, especially of the world of spirits in which he stands to the rest in both *opposition* and *relation*. His own good is therefore the *Summum Bonum*, the supreme or sovereign good—the good of each is the good of all. ( See Bk. II, Chap. vi. pp. 143-45 ). For these reasons, a *non-rational* being cannot be a person, at least in the ethical sense of the term. ( See BK. II, Chap. vi, p. 150 ); because the action of a self-conscious being only who acts from *preconceived end* can be the object of moral judgment. We do not pass moral judgment upon the actions of *non-rational* beings such as the lower animals and the other objects of nature; nor of the persons who have lost their rational powers as the insane, the somnambule and the delirious.



( See above, Chap. I, pp. 4-6 ). Again, the very possibility of moral judgment rests on the supposition that we are able to compare the action, with regard to its agreement or disagreement, with a standard or ideal, thus indicating that we have the *power of comparison* and also the *power of knowing* such a standard or ideal—both of which prove the *rationality* of our nature. Hence from whatever standpoint,—whether from the standpoint of its object, or that of its subject—we view the nature of moral judgment, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that only a person, a self-conscious being, is capable of moral censure or approval that is expressed in the moral judgment. Thus *Reason* is a postulate of moral judgment. This will become more manifest if we consider the other presuppositions of moral judgment.

(B) **Self-determination** :—A person is necessarily a *self-determined* or free being. For in so far as he is rational, he is moral ; and in so far as he is moral, he is free, morality consisting in free-obedience to a self-imposed law. “The ought of duty is not a command imposed upon us from without. It is simply the voice of the true self within us. Conscience is the sense that we are *not ourselves* ; and the voice of duty is the voice that says, ‘to thine own self be true’.” ( Prof. Mackenzie, *Manual of Ethics*, p. 254 ). In this connection let us listen to the argument of Kant : If we examine the nature of man we find that he has a *double* being—he has a *sensuous* nature and an *intelligible* nature—he is a phenomenon and a noumenon. “Man is undoubtedly a member of the natural world : even his intellectual

capacities may up to a certain extent be said to have their province in nature. But man, if he is to be a moral being, must so far *look upon* himself as a member of an intelligible or spiritual world. He must, 'erect himself above himself.' The moral law speaks to the soul. It is the law which is the law of his own nature. Hence the obedience to the moral law is not obedience in the strict sense at all ; rather the soul willingly adopts the dictates of the moral law as a maxim of its own. "It is only when the agent takes up this position as himself at one with the law—as virtually a law-giver—that the will is moral. Morality then implies that the will of the agent gives the law—that the will is *autonomous*. And, yet, man, as a natural being has not this autonomy ; he has, on the contrary, a will governed by sensuous objects of desire. His autonomous will is an *ideal* will ; by it he conceives himself as on the platform of a world where reason rules supreme, whilst at the same time, he cannot, as human, free himself from the consciousness that the ideal will is a law restricting and controlling the desires of the natural man."

"So, too, with *freedom*, which is only another name for autonomy of will. Freedom like autonomy is no quality of the natural will. It is only in the power of adopting the moral law as a maxim governing our will, and adopting it so intimately, that the maxim is thought as the very utterance of our own higher selves, that we are free :—in other words, have a real causative originality—a power of absolutely commencing a series of events. Freedom, therefore, forms the standpoint on

which morality is made possible. They describe the qualities of that transcendent will whose voice is the moral law and which the human soul by reason recognises as her own. They imply, therefore, behind the phenomenal human being a noumenal reality—a will which can will what it ought.” ( Prof. Wallace’s *Kant*, pp. 211—13 ). In short, as a rational being—as a person—man is free ; and as a natural being, he is under the bondage of necessity. The freedom of the will is thus proved to be a postulate of moral judgment.

In recent times Dr. Martineau expresses the same view in a slightly different way : “either free-will is a fact, or moral judgment a delusion. We could never condemn one turn of act or thought, did we not believe the agent to have command of another ; and just in proportion as we perceive in his temperament or education or circumstances, the certain preponderance of particular suggestions, and the near approach to an inner necessity, do we criticise him rather as a natural object than a responsible being, and deal with his aberrations as maladies instead of sins. The ordinary rule which, in awarding penalties of wrong, takes into consideration the presence or absence of violent temptation, assumes a personal power of resistance never wholly crushed but sometimes severely strained. Were we, in our moral problem, as much at the mercy of the laws of association as we are in our efforts to remember what we have forgotten or to invent what is wanting in a design we ought surely to look on the guilty will with the same neutrality as on the failing memory or unfertile

imagination. This is indeed prevailingly admitted by those who reduce the human being to the denomination of mere natural laws. The application of praise or blame, they acknowledge, is in itself as absurd as to applaud the sun rise or be angry at the rain ; and the only difference is, that men are manageable for the future, and are susceptible to the influence of our sentiments regarding them, while the elements are not ; so that it may be judicious, with a view to benefits to come, to commit the absurdity of praising what is not praiseworthy, and censuring what is not to blame. Thus to reduce the moral sentiments to a policy providing for the future, instead of a sentence pronounced upon the past, is simply to renounce them ; and amounts to a confession that they cannot co-exist with a theory of necessary causation." "Moral judgment, then, postulates moral freedom ; and by this we mean, not the absence of foreign constraint, but the presence of a personal power of preference in relation to the inner suggestions and springs of action, as freely preferred or excluded by our will." (Types of Ethical Theory, vol. II, pp. 41—43 ).

Dr. Sidgwick, on the other hand, entertains a view diametrically opposite to the foregoing. He observes : "If happiness, whether private or general, be taken as the ultimate end of action on a Libertarian view, the adoption of a Determinist view affords no ground for rejecting it : and if Excellence is in itself admirable and desirable, it surely remains equally so whether any individual's approximation to it is entirely determined

by inherited nature and external influences or not :— except so far as the notion of excellence includes that of Free-Will. Now Free Will is obviously not included in our common ideal of physical and intellectual perfection ; and it seems to me also not to be included in the common notions of the excellences of character which we call virtues : the manifestations of courage, temperance, and justice do not become less admirable because we can trace “their antecedents in a happy balance of inherited dispositions developed by a careful education.” ( *Methods of Ethics*, seventh edition, p. 68 ). Thus, according to him, freedom of the will is indifferent to morality inasmuch as its conception is not involved in the conception either of the moral ideal or of virtue. Such an assertion is certainly astounding. Virtues are good habits of will that are acquired through a series of good *voluntary* activities ; and voluntary activities are meaningless unless in their determination the will acts freely. Thus we find that the idea of virtue involves the idea of free will. Again, the voluntary activities by which virtues are acquired are good only in so far as they agree with or realise the ultimate end of action. Hence virtues are the chief means by which that ultimate end is realised. Virtue and the ultimate end of action are thus related as means to an end and inseparable. Like the idea of virtue, the idea of the ultimate end also involves the idea of freedom inasmuch as it is the ultimate end of *voluntary* action, i. e. by voluntary action only it *should* be realised. So that it will be absurd to say that it is indifferent whether we realise it

by voluntary activities or by involuntary as prompted by "inherited nature and external impulses," because here the notion of excellence includes the notion of free-will. Therefore, the involuntary manifestation of courage, temperance and justice is certainly not admirable, if admiration in this case implies moral approval. Indeed, it is very difficult to understand how "the ideas of 'responsibility,' of 'obligation,' of good or ill 'desert,' of 'justice,' and proportionate 'retribution' of praise and blame" can be accounted for without the assumption that conduct is the issue of free-will—that conduct is the determination of self that is self-determined in its activity. And an ethical system that is built upon such an indifferent ground must be, after all, as Dr. Martineau observes, a dead and silent structure without any moral significance.

Now, an important question suggests itself : what is the true meaning of Freedom ? The different ethical schools differ considerably with regard to the true meaning of freedom ; and some schools altogether deny freedom of the human will. It is now our principal business to discuss these different theories in order to determine the true meaning of freedom that has moral significance. The problem of freedom of the will is ultimately metaphysical rather than ethical. So that without entering into any controversy that is strictly metaphysical we shall confine ourselves to the considerations of its those aspects that have any direct bearing upon morality.

It is admitted on all hands that the voluntary action

is determined by *motive*. It is also admitted that motive is that which *moves us to action*. But what is it that moves us to action ? Upon the true character of the answer to this question entirely depends the solution of the controversy raised between the two rival schools—the *Determinists* and the *Libertarians*.

(a) **Determinism** :—The Determinists hold that the action is determined by the *strongest motive*. When there is only one motive present in the mind, it at once determines the action. When there is a conflict of motives, the *strongest* one prevails and determines the action. According to them motive is a *feeling* which is the resultant of facts and events external to and independent of, the will. Thus, the motive, which induces the will to act in a particular way, is the creature, not of the will, but of something else quite independent of the will. So that, in no case, man can be said to be free. In answer to the question what is that something else which determines the motive ?, they maintain that the motive is ultimately determined by a man's *character* and *circumstances*. But if it is again asked "what is character" ?, they would answer that "it must be traced ultimately to circumstances, the constitution of a man's bodily organism, the things and events he has seen and experienced, and certain mental predispositions which are his by heridity". So that if any one could know his character accurately, he could foretell his conduct with unerring precision, just as, if the cause were known the effect could be foretold with utmost accuracy. The character and circumstances being entirely external to

and independent of, the will, the power of free selection of feelings ( i. e. motives ) in the case of their conflict is absolutely denied to it ; and the action, which is merely the external expression of motive, is also regarded as "the joint outcome of character and circumstances."

The above doctrine is entirely based on the supposition that motive, character and circumstances are *really* external to and independent of, the will, and that in action the will is entirely determined by these external forces. But we have found ( See Bk. I, Chap. IV, pp. 59—70 ) that the true motive is not a feeling, but a desire as freely selected by the will ; that in almost all instances it is a complex state constituted by several desires more or less prominent and organically related to one another, and that this complex state which is the true psychological antecedent to and therefore the real determinant of voluntary action is *intention*. We have found also that intention is a complex of the ideas of several ends *preconceived* by the will, or of several *ideal* consequences foreseen and intended by the willing agent, thus indicating that it is wholly a product of the activity of the will. Again, it must be admitted that intention is related to character. But character is also a product of the will acting upon the circumstances. The circumstances, again, are such in so far as they are related to and reacted upon by, character. Thus, we find that will, character, circumstances, motive and conduct are interrelated and inseparable. Hence it is absurd to say that the will has nothing to do with the determination of the action. ( See above Chap. II ).



(b) **Libertarianism** :—The Libertarians, on the other hand, maintain that the will can determine actions independently of motive, character and circumstances. We seem to have an irresistible belief that we can always choose freely between two opposite alternatives and that our choice is not determined by antecedent conditions and circumstances, but that we always might choose otherwise than we do choose. And, again, we cannot resist the conviction that this something which we call freedom of choice is bound up in such a way with our moral judgments and with our conception of merit and demerit, responsibility, &c. that we cannot set aside our conviction of freedom without setting aside our moral convictions also and thereby undermining our whole life. We cannot be morally bound to do or leave undone without being free to do ; and we cannot punish wrongdoing if it were unavoidable, nor consider men responsible for what they could not help doing.

The above doctrine is inconsistent with the nature of the will which acts to realise the idea of preconceived ends or objects of desire, the attainment of which is its only good—its only source of satisfaction for the time being. It is therefore absurd to say that the choice between opposite alternatives is *unmotivated*. As Prof. Mackenzie has truly remarked : “To act without motives, i. e. without reference to anything that may reasonably serve as an inducement to action would be to act from blind impulse, as some of the lower animals may be supposed to do. But this is evidently the very reverse of what we understand by freedom.” ( Manual of

Ethics, p. 90 ). Again, it is inconceivable that the will can act independently of character as if character were something entirely different from the will. "The liberty of the will does not reside in indifference but in the power of acting in accordance with conceptions and ideas." ( Janet, Theory of Morals, p. 372 ). It must be admitted also that the inherited dispositions, external circumstances, &c. have great influence upon the will. ( See Bk. I, Chap. iv, pp. 55—61 and above, Chap. II ).

(c) **The doctrine of self-determination:—**

Thus we find that the true freedom is not *absolute indetermination*. What is it, then ? It is evidently *self-determination*, i. e. determination of self *by itself*, not by nothing as the Libertarians say, nor by things that are absolutely other i. e. external to the self as the Determinists hold. The will, i. e. the self, in its activity—in its choice of desires or formation of motive—is determined by itself, not that it is not determined at all by the inherited dispositions, external circumstances, &c. but that it is determined by them in so far as it reacts upon them, thus reducing them to be the means to its own end, to be the instruments to its own realisation. The Sanskrit word "स्वाधीनता" that corresponds to the word "freedom" signifies exactly the same thing, viz.—*subjection to one's own self*. • Thus self-determination is the only meaning of freedom that is consistent with morality. We are now going to unfold the contents of the idea of self-determination.

(i) Self-determination involves *necessity* or *other-determination*. When we say that in its activity self is

determined by itself we do not mean that it is not determined by anything else. The self is an integral member of the world-system, so that it has to act in relation to other objects—it and they act and react upon one another. Thus, in so far as its activity is determined by its relations to them, this activity is *at least partly other-determined*. This other-determination involved necessarily in self-determination is *threefold* : (1) In the first place, every man is born with a definite character. The human nature is not a *tabula rasa* as Locke says ; it is born with inherited tendencies physical and mental which considerably influence the will in its activity, that is, they help or retard its activity to a considerable extent. (2) In the second place, the environment in the midst of which a man is born and lives considerably moulds his activity. (3) In the third place, the character that he builds up in the course of his life out of and with the help of the aforesaid influences brings in an additional other-determination. The formation of character is an essential condition of a well-regulated life. But character is nothing but a system of settled habits of will or action. Thus the formation of a good character and the cultivation of virtues which are also habits of discharging duties are indispensably necessary for a moral life ; and its progress and value entirely depend upon such acquisition. But all habits are definite and uniform in their expression ; and the actions determined by them are likewise definite and uniform. Hence the life of a man of virtue and a good moral character is, to a large extent, a life of necessity. His habits, which

are the creatures of his *free* will, react upon it—determine it and direct it into definite and uniform channels. The will weaves out *freely* the web of its own bondage, and thus creates a life of necessity for itself, only to facilitate its progress towards its goal—the perfection of its own nature. A man, whose actions are indefinite and change from moment to moment, is, on the contrary, not a virtuous man—has no moral character. Hence self-determination involves an element of necessity, if by necessity we mean, as we usually do, nothing but *uniformity* of conduct.

(ii) Thus, though the moral life is a life of necessity, yet it is a life of *freedom*. This, of course, appears somewhat incongruous. But the incongruity is only apparent. True freedom, as Hegel said, is the *truth* of necessity. True freedom, as we have found above, is the determination by the self, and therefore, is the absence of determination by the not-self, i. e. objects which are *absolutely foreign to and outside of* the self. But there is no object in the world that is really such, inasmuch as if it were so, there could not be any action and reaction between it and the self, action and reaction implying affinity or relativity of nature. Thus character which is the result of these actions and reactions is the source of both the necessity and freedom that are presupposed by the moral life. Character is the source of necessity in two ways : in the first place, it is the result of action of the self as limited and determined by the inherited dispositions, external circumstances, &c. ;

and in the second place, it is the habit of action that is formed by the self itself. Again, character is also the source of freedom, because only by forming character the self can act in accordance with something that is its own creature and true expression, and thus liberate itself from the bondage of foreign influences. Character, in short, is that which sums up the whole self—the self that lives and acts in relation to the so-called external conditions and influences ; and by so living and acting it realises itself—gradually attains its own true nature. Thus, when we say that our moral life is a life of necessity what we really mean to say is that the actions which constitute it are the *necessary* i. e. uniform expressions of character. Again, when we say that our moral life is a life of freedom, we mean to say that our actions are determined by nothing external to us, but by our own character. Moreover, our moral life is not stationary, but it is progressive, and its progress implies that it is not determined by a fixed and uniform character. Character, therefore, also changes along with the change of our moral life. Such a change of moral life and character implies that the self is not *exhaustibly* summed up in a particular stage of character ;—it is only so summed up in the *best type* of character which is its perfection. Thus, the self always remains free to change the character ; but, still, so long as it does not change it, it allows itself to be absolutely determined by it. Therefore, throughout our whole moral life we remain both free and under necessity. Self-determination is, thus, proved to contain the elements of both liberty and

necessity. We may therefore repeat the famous saying of Hegel—"freedom is the *truth* of necessity."

(iii) **Degrees of freedom** :—Freedom admits of degrees. All men are not free exactly in the same sense ; and even a particular man is not free in the same sense at all stages of his life. The moral life, as we have found, is progressive and therefore passes through different stages, each stage being lower than the succeeding and higher than the preceding stage. So is the character. Hence a man is not free in exactly the same sense in a particular stage of the moral life as he is in a higher stage. In the lowest stage of the moral life he has the lowest kind and degree of freedom ; and only in the highest stage he is *perfectly* free ; while in the intermediate stages he has different degrees and kinds of freedom. Thus, there are lower and higher, lowest and highest kinds of freedom. Similarly different men, attaining different stages of the moral life, have different kinds and degrees of freedom. Or in other words, the degree or kind of freedom is determined by the *kind* of the self whose freedom is to be considered. We may say there are, as it were, *three selves* in a man : the *sentient or lower self* which is constituted by his impulses ; *character* or the universe in which he habitually lives and which constitutes his second self ; and lastly, the *rational or higher self* which is his true self, because only by gradually realising this self, by gradually making it more and more perfect, he is on the way to attaining the ultimate end of his life—his perfect liberation from the limitations of his other selves. In so long as

he follows his impulses he remains far away from the goal of his life, and thus free in the lowest sense of the term. In so long as he follows his character, he is raised to a higher level of freedom ; and if the character is good, the freedom is still higher. Again, when his actions become still more rational he advances a step further towards his liberation. Ultimately, when he becomes perfectly rational—when he acts in perfect harmony with the laws of his true self he becomes perfectly liberated and free in the truest and highest sense of the term. Of course, this stage being the *ideal*, he must take infinite time to attain it ; therefore, it will always remain *unattainable*. Thus we find that the degree of freedom is proportionate to the degree of rationality that we attain at a particular stage of our life. The more we are rational the more are we free. Freedom and rationality are equivalent terms. This point will be more clear when we shall consider the standards of moral judgment in Book II,

(C) **Organic relation to society** :—Another important implication involved in the conception of a *person* is that he is a *social* being. We have found that a person is a rational being ; he is an essential and integral member of the community of spiritual beings. He is moral in so far as he is rational, and he is rational in so far as his own good is the common good—the good for each is the good for all. The moral law obliges every responsible being to seek to promote the welfare of the world, including his own. Hence the furtherance of the supreme good of humanity is the object of moral ac-

tions ; and the rational or ideal self can be realised, not in any one individual but in the relations of individuals to one another, i. e. in the society of rational beings. ( For further development of this point, see Bk. III, chap. I ).

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## BOOK III.

### CHAPTER I.

#### Aspects of Moral life.

So far we have been dealing with the moral theories; we are now going to deal with the concrete moral life. From whatever standpoint we view our moral life, whether from the standpoint of its history, or from that of its inner nature, we find it has two aspects or sides opposite yet related to each other. Its history "reveals, on one side, constantly increasing stress on *individual* intelligence and affection. The transformation of customary into reflective morals in the change from 'Do those things which our kin, class, or city do' to 'Be a person with certain habits of desire and deliberation'. The history of the race also reveals constantly growing emphasis upon the *social* nature of the objects and ends to which personal preferences are to be devoted. While the agent has been learning that it is his personal attitude which counts in his deeds, he has also learnt that there is no attitude which is exclusively private in scope, none which does not need to be socially valued or judged. Theoretic analysis enforces the same lesson as history. It tells us that moral quality *resides in* the habitual dispositions of an agent; and that it *consists of* the tendency of these dispositions to secure (or hinder) values which are sociably shared or sharable." ( Profs.

Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 427 ). Thus our moral life is constituted by two elements or factors—or it has two aspects or sides : it is, on the one hand, *essentially* individual—it is the life of a man regarded as an individual ; yet, on the other hand, it is also *essentially* social—it is a life which lives, grows and develops only in a society. The aim of this chapter is to dilate on these points in order to show that the individual life and the social life—the individual and society—are but two sides or aspects of the same reality viewed from two different standpoints. Before we can show that, we should examine carefully two erroneous theories that have been advanced to explain—

**The relation of the individual to society :**

(I) **Individualism** :—The radical conception of Individualism is that every man is born with some rights called “natural rights” by virtue of which he is not only an absolutely independent and distinct “unit” or “atom”, but also “*natura hostes*”, i. e. naturally hostile to one another : or in other words, men were, in the beginning, in a state of nature, not in a state of society, and struggling for existence against one another. Thus, as Dr. Leacock puts it, “Man is, by nature anything but a social animal ; indeed he finds ‘nothing but grief in the company of his fellows’, all being equally rapacious and self-seeking. The state of nature is consequently a state of war, the war of each against all ; it is a state of ‘continual fear and danger of violent death ; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.’” How and why did, then, men come to be in a state of society ?

How did, then, society originate ? In this way : For the purpose of erecting "such a common power as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners and the injuries of one another," people "confer all their power and strength upon one man or upon one assembly of men," .....that is, "appoint one man or assembly of men to bear their person.....This is more than consent and concord ; it is a real unity of them all in one and the same person, made by covenant of every man with every man, in such a manner as if every man should say to every man, 'I authorise, and give up my right of governing myself to this man or this assembly of men, on condition that thou give up thy right to him and authorise all his actions in like manner'. This done, the multitude so united in one person is called a commonwealth, in Latin *civitas*,.....which, to define it, is 'one person, of whose acts a great multitude by mutual covenant one with another have made themselves every one the author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient for their peace and common defence'." ( Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Pt. II, chap. XVII. \. Locke also tells the same tale : "Man, being born with a title to perfect freedom, and an uncontrolled enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of the law of nature, equally with any other man or number of men in the world, hath by nature a power not only to preserve his life, liberty and estate against .....other men ; but to judge of and punish the breaches of that law in others.....There and there only, is political society where every one of the members hath quit-

ted this natural power, resigned it up into the hands of the community in all cases that exclude him not from appealing for protection to the law established by it." ( Civil Government, chap. vii, sec. 87 ). "Man," said Rousseau, "is born free." i. e. independent of the laws, habits, and conventions of society. And, according to him, "some pact takes place when men find the hindrances to their preservation in a state of nature too strong for the forces which each individual can bring to bear against them."

Although Bentham and Mill also are the upholders of Individualism, they do not subscribe to the above "historical fiction" to account for the origin of society. With Bentham, the relation of the individual to society is one of *antagonism* ; and therefore, "every law is an evil. For every law, for him, is contrary to liberty ; and every infraction of liberty is followed by a natural sentiment of pain," pain being regarded as the ultimate evil. ( See Principles of Legislation, pp. 48 and 94 ). Mill's idea of Individuality was evidently biased by the Bentham's that law is an evil. "Having so deep a sense, as he has, of social solidarity, he nevertheless treats the central life of the individual as something to be carefully fenced round against the impact of social forces." ( Dr. Bosanquet, The Philosophical Theory of the State, p. 60 ).

**Criticism** :—(1) The central idea of Individualism is that each man is an absolutely distinct and independent "unit" or "atom," so that there is nothing in him which may bind him with other men ; he is absolutely

isolated, unrelated unit. This theory, therefore, resembles that crude popular theory of knowledge which regards all objects as absolutely isolated from and independent of, one another. As Dr. Basanquet has truly remarked : "the root idea, then, of the view ... .. is simply that the individual or society—it makes no difference which we take—is what it *prima facie* appears to be. This is why we have called it '*prima facie*' theory or 'theory of the first look'." ( Ibid, p. 82 ). This theory is, thus, evidently based upon the superficial view of the nature of man, as the popular theory of knowledge is based upon the superficial view of the nature of objects. Each man is, no doubt, a unit ; but he is not a *mere* unit : a mere unit—an absolutely self-contained unit is inconceivable. The modern science and philosophy have combined to falsify such a conception. They teach us that the universe is a unity in which the constituents are inseparably interrelated. Another misconception, which is a corollary of it is that man is by nature *selfish*, i. e. wholly self-centred or guided by self-regarding impulses only. But it is now generally admitted that human nature is not wholly selfish ; it contains altruistic or other-regarding impulses also which bind or tend to bind one man with another. Furthermore, man is not *merely sentient*, i. e. not guided by blind impulses only : he is also *rational* and as such contains a universal principle in him which binds him with all beings and things. Thus, according to Individualism, man is so little that he is an "atom" ; but according to his true conception he is so large that

he is "a great individuality." ( See Nettleship's Remains, i. 160 ).

(2) It is needless to say that the theory of the "social contract" is a fiction having no foundation in history. For this reason it is now regarded as an exploded theory.

(3) Individualism has altogether failed to account for the true relation of the individual to society. "The individual ... .. is joined to the state not by a voluntary conjunction but by an indissoluble bond. The relation is a compulsory one. Each of us is born into the state ; we are part of the state and the state is part of us. The state is not a mutual assurance society, membership in which is a matter that the citizen may accept or reject. Nor is the true measure of our social duties to be found in the extent of benefit that we receive from society. Our common experience of the nature of the state indicates much that conflicts with the narrow view suggested by the *quid pro quo* of a contract relation. Patriotism—the sacrifice of the individual's interests to the claims of the community—we account one of the highest of virtues." ( Dr. Leacock, Elements of Political Science, pp. 33—34 ).

The theory of antagonism, that, according to Bentham and Mill, exists between the individual and society, is based upon two erroneous suppositions ; (i) the individual liberty is unbounded ; (ii) Pain is the ultimate evil, or Pleasure is the ultimate good. The former view reduces liberty to license and is founded on the supposition that each individual is an absolutely

independent unit—a supposition which we have proved to be erroneous. The latter represents the general view of hedonism which we have refuted in Bk. II, chap. III, pp. 39–42, 52–54 and also chap. IV, pp. 66–79 ). But, it is curious that Mill himself has been compelled under the influence of his study of Comte to considerably modify his view. He says : “The social state is at once so natural, so necessary and so habitual to man, that, except in some unusual circumstances or by an effort of voluntary abstraction, he never conceives himself otherwise than as a member of a body ; and this association is riveted more and more, as mankind are further removed from the state of savage independence. Any condition, therefore which is essential to a state of society, becomes more and more an indispensable part of every person’s conception of the state of things which he is born into, and which is the destiny of human being.” ( Utilitarianism, p. 46 ).

The line of thought suggested by the above criticism finds its extreme expression in what is called “the organic theory of society,” which we are now going to consider.

**II. The organic theory of Society :—its false form : Socialism :—**We have found that Individualism looks upon the individual “as a separate self-contained unit who joins with his fellows for the formation of civil society in a purely mechanical fashion.” The society from this point of view becomes merely a numerical aggregate. Such a theory of social relations is often spoken of as “an arithmetical, mechanical, or



monadistic theory of society." As opposed to this theory we have the "organic theory of society." "The central idea of the theory is to endeavour to set aside the contrast between the individual and the state ( or society ) by amalgamating them into one. It discards all such ideas as mutual contract, reciprocal service, infrangible immunities, &c. It views the state ( or society ) and the individual as part and parcel of the same thing, both of them being included in what may be called the social organism. As is the relation of the hand to the body, or the leaf to the tree, so is the relation of man to society. He exists in it, and it in him. As it is impossible to consider that the hand has a separate existence from that of the body, so is it impossible to divorce the individual from society. The antithesis, therefore, between the single citizen and the collective state ( or society ) rests upon a false basis, and implies a view of society that is contrary to fact." ( Dr. Leacock, *op. cit.* p. 80 ).

The first beginnings of the organic conception of society are found in the philosophy of the Greeks, particularly in that of Plato and Aristotle. But this theory has taken a new but somewhat misleading turn and received a profound development in recent times in the hands of Herbert Spencer (though he is an individualist), Albert Schäffle, Sir Leslie Stephen and Professor Alexander. The Greek conception of society is not based upon any analogy between it and a vegetable or animal organism, as it is the case with the latter writers. Thus, what we understand by "the organic theory of society" is that society is an organism just like a vege

table or animal organism. The organic theory, in this sense, is supported by these authorities, not as a useful analogy, but as a literal truth.

**Criticism** :— 1) The faults of the organic theory are opposite to those of Individualism. The latter takes an *abstract* view of man by emphasizing his individual, and undermining his social, side ; while the former takes an equally abstract view of him, by laying stress on his social, and undermining his individual, side. Thus, both the theories are abstract, one-sided and imperfect. The one-sided tendency is found even in the writings of Plato and Aristotle. The tendency to subordinate and sacrifice the interests of the individual, is conspicuously present in the *Republic*, where the importance of the well-being of society is emphasized in such a degree as to make that of the individual almost disappear or sink into insignificance before it. For instance, it is advised there that no individual should be allowed to have anything that he may call his own : even his wife and children should be public property, and the feeble children should be thrown into the street in order to make the state composed of the most energetic and competent members. ( See particularly Chap. V, pp. 168—170 ).

(2) The analogy between society and a physical organism is not sufficient to make the organic theory at all tenable. Though there are many points of agreement between them, the differences are also essential. As Dr. Leacock has truly remarked : "Interesting as is the parallel between the collective aspect of humanity

and the life of a single organic unit, the difference between the two appears on impartial examination so great that the analogy cannot be looked on as a true guide to social policy, or a true expression of man's relations to his environment. The difference that Spencer masks under the cognate terms 'concrete' and 'discrete,' is in reality of a fundamental character. In neither the physical nor the metaphysical sense of the terms is it true that the individual *is literally* a part of society. The existence of each human being is a fact apart. The existence of society is only an abstraction. Society has no single brain, no 'social sensorium' ; it has no single physical life. This distinction is therefore more than a mere divergence of special qualities. It is essential and absolute,—it is the difference between 'black' and 'white', and between 'yes' and 'no'. Even if we accept the analogy as only an analogy, it does not follow that it is always a proper guide for our social conduct. Too great an amalgamation of the individual and the state ( or society ) is as dangerous an ideal as a too great emancipation of the individual will. Individual variation, individual 'unlikeness', and, in a sense, individual isolation of effort is as necessary for the welfare of mankind as collective activity and mutual support. The organic theory of society deprived of its ingenious biological setting, presents only one phase of the truth, erring in one direction as much as extreme individualism has erred in the other." ( Elements of Political Science, pp. 87—88 ). For further criticism see Bk. II, Chap. V, pp. 133—135.

**III. The organic theory of Society : its true form** :—We have found above that both the individualistic and the organic theory of society are abstract, one-sided and imperfect, inasmuch as both of them have failed to understand the true nature of the individual and society, and therefore, also, their true relation. The real solution of the problem lies in the true understanding of the nature of man. Both of the foregoing theories rest on a misconception of human nature,—viz. it is *essentially sentient* ; it is, no doubt, also rational,—but reason is not its essence and guiding principle. The individualists like Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, and the evolutionists like Spencer, Sir. L. Stephen and Prof. Alexander all are sensationalists. And on the sensationalistic principles the individuals must be isolated, selfish, brutish ; and whatever device we may invent to bind them together into a society, they will remain as apart as before ; and the society will be no better than a merely mechanical aggregate of them having no life and personality of its own. The true nature of man is the synthesis or unity of reason and sentience ; in it reason works out its realisation in and through sentience. Thus human nature is an *organism* ; but it is not a *physical* organism—it is a *spiritual* organism—an organism in which the animating and guiding principle is reason, not sentience. Or in other words, every man is not a *mere* individual but a *person*. ( See Bk. II, Chap. VI ). But reason or personality is the universal element in man which binds him with all other beings and things. On the platform of reason men stand as

integral members of a community—as essential parts of a system or whole—as vital limbs of a spiritual organism. That “an actual living society is an infinitely higher creature than a steam-engine, a plant or an animal ; and that the best of their ideas are not too good to be employed in analysing it” are truths that cannot be gainsaid. The first beginnings of this doctrine are found in the philosophy of the *Upanishads*, in the Republic of Plato and in the Politics of Aristotle ; but in its most explicit and developed form it is found in the writings of Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians such as Green, Bradley, Wallace, Mackenzie, and Bosanquet. The last writer in the 7th chapter of his *Philosophical Theory of the State* has shown beyond doubt from the psychological analysis of human nature or intelligence that man and society are but two aspects of the same reality viewed from two distinct standpoints. The proof is so convincing and fascinating that I cannot but give below the substance of it.

The fundamental truth which we are to prove is “that the common self or moral person of society is more real than the apparent individual”; and therefore our main purpose is to explain “what is meant by saying that ‘a will’ can be embodied in the State, in society, in law and institutions ; and how it is possible for the individual, as we know him to be in an identity with this will, such as continually to vary, but never wholly to disappear. How can a man’s real self lie in a great degree outside his normal self, and be something which he only now and then gets hold of distinctly, and never completely ?”

This we can show (1) "by pointing out the analogy between the groups or systems of which our intelligence is composed, and the groups or systems which make up the fabric of society," and (2) by exhibiting them "as up to a certain point aspects of the same fact."

(1) It is a well-known and firmly-corroborated truth of modern psychology that the human mind is not an *association* of ideas, thoughts, feelings and volitions, but an *organisation* of them ; or we may say that the mind is a vast system of numerous smaller groupings or systems of ideas, thoughts, feelings and volitions. "By organisation, as opposed to association", is meant "determination of particulars by the scheme or general nature of a systematic whole to which they belong, as opposed to their determination by immediate links uniting them with what, relatively speaking, are other particulars in casual juxtaposition of units." A "crowd" is an instance of association, while an "army" is an instance of organisation ; or a zigzag or unconnected train of thought, of the former and an argument, of the latter. "There is one more essential point. A mind has its dominant nature, but is no single system equally organised throughout. It is rather a construction of such systems, which may be in all degrees of alliance, indifference, and opposition to one another. Each of such systems, or groups of ideas and experiences, has its own dominant scheme, and its own tendency in controlling thought or action. And as a general rule, in proportion as one system is active, all the others are quiescent ; in proportion as we are intent or engaged upon one train of

thought or one pursuit, we are not alive to suggestions belonging to any other. Every system, or group of this kind, is called in psychology an "Apperceptive mass", because it is a set of ideas, bound together by a common rule or scheme, which dictates the point of view from which perception will take place, as far as the system in question is active. And without some "apperception", some point of view in the mind which enables the new comer to be classed, there cannot be perception at all... ..And in the action of every apperceptive mass, in as far as it determines thought by the general nature of a systematic whole, rather than through the attraction exercised by unit upon unit, we have an example of organisation as opposed to association". But it must be remembered that these apperceptive masses may work *unconsciously*. Most of our ideas that control our thoughts and actions are not explicit, and perhaps the greatest part of our mind works from the background as unconscious force. But, yet, "their action is always systematic—the nature of the whole modifying what it comes in contact with, and being modified by it."

If we look at society we find the same truth. We refuse "to take a crowd as a true type of society," and we look to "the example of an army for the leading features of organisation as opposed to casual 'association.'" "The characteristic of an army" is "the determination of every unit in it, not by the movements and impulses of his immediate neighbours, but by the scheme or idea of the whole. Now on looking closer, we see that society as such is a vast tissue of systems of this

type, each of them a relatively, though not absolutely, closed and self-complete organisation. There are wheels within wheels, systems within systems, groups within groups. But, speaking generally, the business and pleasure of society is carried on by persons arranged in groups, which exhibit the characteristic of organisation that the capacity of every person is determined by the general nature and principle of the group considered as a whole, and not by his relations to the units who happen to be next him. Such groups, for example, are the trades and professions. Their structure may be very different. In some the workshop is again a subordinate self-organised group. In others the professional man works alone, and to all appearances goes his own way. It is common to all of them, however, that they form groupings of members, within each of which groupings all members are determined in a certain way by the common nature of the group. Within his trade or profession, a man acts, as it is said, in a definite 'capacity'. He regards himself and is regarded from a definite point of view, and all other points of view tend to be neglected while and in so far as he is acting in the capacity corresponding to his membership of a certain group."

"*Prima facie*, there may be, as with systems which compose the mind, all degrees of alliance, indifference, or opposition between these groupings of persons ; and the same person, belonging to many different groups, may find his diverse 'capacities' apparently at variance with one another. .... It is plain that unless, on the whole, a working harmony were maintained between the different



groups which form society, life could not go on. And it is for this reason that the State, as the widest grouping whose members are effectively united by a common experience, is necessarily the one community which has absolute power to ensure, by force, if need be, at least sufficient adjustment of the claims of all the other groupings to make life possible. Assuming, indeed, that all the groupings are organs of a single pervading life, we find it incredible that there should ultimately be irreconcilable opposition between them. That they should contradict one another is not more nor less possible than that human nature should be at variance with itself."

"Thus we have seen that the mind, and society or the State, are identical in the characteristic of being organisations, each composed of a system of organisations, every superior and subordinate grouping having its own nature and principle which determines its members as such, and every one, consequently, tending to impose upon its members a peculiar capacity or point of view, which in so far as a given system is active, tends to put all other systems out of sight. The connection between these systems is of very different kinds, and very unequal in degree ; but in so far as the mind and the community are actual working wholes, it is to be presumed that in each there is an ultimate or pervading adjustment which hinders contradiction from proceeding to destructive extremes. And neither the mind nor the community, as working organisations, can be accounted for on the principle of mere association."

(2) Thus we have proved that both mind and

society are organised wholes, having perfect resemblance to each other. Our next business is to show that these two wholes are really the same structure viewed from different standpoints. The proof may be divided into three parts :—

(a) Each group or institution of society may be shown to be the external expression of a set of corresponding groups or systems of the individual minds.

(b) The individual mind as a whole corresponds to society as a whole, regarded from a particular standpoint.

(c) Thus, though the social whole is individualised in every mind, it is fully or almost fully realised only “in the totality of minds in a given community considered as an identical working system.”

(a) Analyse any social institution, such, for instance, as a *rate-supported elementary school*. What is it ? It is not merely a mechanical aggregate of a number of buildings, students, teachers, managers, parents, and the public. But it is an organisation, the actual reality of which “lies in the facts that certain living minds are connected in a certain way”. They “must all of them have certain operative ideas, and must be guided according to these ideas in certain portions of their lives, if the school is to be a school.” But in so far as they are guided by certain operative ideas, certain apperceptive masses are active in them, determining the tone and direction of those ideas. But as different persons are differently connected with the school, only a particular and distinct apperceptive mass out of the set of apperceptive

pliant masses corresponding to the school as a whole, is awake and operative in each person, or more particularly in every class of persons concerned. "No school could be made of teachers alone or of pupils alone ; nor again, could a school be made with teachers who were all the same, or with pupils who were all the same."

"So, if we could visualise the reality of the school—the institution—what we should see would be an identical connection running through a number of minds, various and variously conditioned. But within each mind the connection would take a particular shape, such as to play into the connections with all other minds, as a cogwheel plays into the other cogwheels of a machine. The pupil must be prepared to learn in his particular way and the teacher to teach in his particular way. The parents and the public also have their own relations to the work of teaching, and whether for good or for evil they take up some attitude to it, and their attitude modifies it. Thus the connection, as it is within any one mind, is useless and meaningless if we take it wholly apart from what corresponds to it in the others. It is like a wheel without an axle or a pump handle without a pump. And it is because of this nature of the elements which make up the institution that it is possible for the institution itself to be an identity, or connection, or meeting point, by which many minds are bound together in a single system."

But this kind of argument does not mean to reduce solid facts into mere ideas. The buildings, appliances, hours of work and attendance, &c. are solid facts. "We

are not to omit the facts in space and time from what we mean by an institution ; the only thing is that we have not known them as they really are till we have known them as bound into unity by the mental systems of which they are the context or the expression". "Thus we may fairly say that every social group or institution, is the aspect in space and time of a set of corresponding mental systems in individual minds."

(b) From the above it is manifest that every social institution corresponds to a system of apperceptive masses in the mind ; consequently there are as many systems of apperceptive masses in the mind as there are institutions in society. But both the mind and society are regarded wholes or systems ; therefore society as a whole or system of the institutions corresponds to the mind as a whole or system of the systems of apperceptive masses corresponding to these institutions. Or in other words, "every individual mind, then, so far as it takes part in social groupings or institutions, is a structure of apperceptive systems, answering, each to each, to the different capacities in which it enters into each grouping respectively." But, as we have found, these capacities or the systems of apperceptive masses answering to them are inconsistent with one another. For this reason, "though the mind must be an actual structure of systems, it is very far from being a rational system of systems. The fact that when one system is active, all others, as a rule, are inert, conceals the contradictions which underlie the entire fabric and protects them from criticism and correction."

"But though the mind is thus implicitly self-contradictory in various degrees, this does not alter the fact that its general nature is to be a unity of organised ideas answering to the actual set of parts which the individual plays in the world of space and time. Thus each individual mind, if we consider it as a whole, is an expression or reflection of society as a whole from a point of view which is distinctive and unique. Every social factor or relation, to which it in any way corresponds, or in which it in any way plays its parts is represented in some feature of its apperceptive organism. And, probably, just as, in any man's idea of London there is hardly any factor of London life which does not at least colour the background; so, in every individual impression of the social whole, there is no social feature that does not, in any way or another, contribute to the total effect. In the dispositions of every mind the entire social structure is reflected in a unique form, and it is on this reflection in every mind, and on the uniqueness of the form in which it is reflected that the working of the social whole, by means of differences which play into one another, depends. If, so to speak, we lay a mind on the dissecting table, we find it to consist for the most part of a fabric of organised dispositions, each disposition corresponding to a unique point of view or special angle from which it plays a part in some human function." "Therefore every individual mind is, as Plato has told us, so far as it goes, for good or evil, the true effective reality of the social whole."

(c) We have shown above that every individual

mind is an individualisation of the social whole. But as elsewhere, so here the whole is not fully and exhaustively realised in any particular part or unit : no doubt the whole is present in each part ; but it is present there only *implicitly*—while it is *explicitly* present only in the totality of the parts, just as the whole mind is present only implicitly in every apperceptive mass, but explicitly only in the totality or system of all the apperceptive masses. Therefore though the social whole is present in every individual mind, it is not *consciously* present there. “The consciousness which guides our lives is a consciousness of something, but not as a rule a consciousness of the place of that something in the whole of life. We live in our objects, but we do not know how or how far our objects identify us with the whole to which we ultimately belong.” Thus, “it is plain that the social whole can, in practice, only be complete in a plurality of individuals.” No one individual can cover the whole ground that the human nature is capable of attaining in the course of its development ; there must be differentiation or “dispersion into a plurality of centres.” The same man ... .. could not be both Plato and Aristotle, nor both Greek and Jew, not even both Spartan and Athenian, not to say both man and woman. We are on less secure ground when we say that he could not effectively and as a rule, be both statesman and shoemaker, or soldier and clergyman.” “The point of these suggestions is to make it clear that, while plurality of human beings is necessary to enable society to cover the ground, as it were,

which human nature is capable of covering, yet actual individuals are not ultimate or equal embodiments of the true particulars of the social universal. We thus see once more that the given individual is only in making, and that his reality may lie largely outside him. His will is not a whole, but implies and rests upon a whole, which is therefore the true nature of his will. We also gain some light on the unity of the social mind."

We therefore conclude that the individual life and the social life are not two *absolutely* distinct lives ; they are rather two aspects of the one and the same life. This conclusion does not mean to undermine either the distinction or the relation between these two lives. None can deny that a man has an individual life which is so *unique* that nothing else in the universe can replace it ; it is also true that this unique individual life is meaningless and an abstraction without its relation to a higher and wider life called the social life. Thus our concrete moral life naturally splits itself into two—the individual life and the social life. Before we proceed to deal with the various aspects or elements of these two sides of our moral life, we should consider one important thing, viz.—

**The relation of Conscience to the Social Organism :—**From the above it is now evident that the individual life, considered by itself, is an abstraction—is an empty, short, brutish life ; and receives its filling and contents only from society ;—only in the social universe it can live, thrive and attain higher

degree of perfection. This is the reason why the social life should be preferred to the private life ; the universe of society to the universe of the individual consciousness. This does not of course imply that there might not be a universe higher than the human society in which the individual self could find a far better scope for its realisation and perfection. A liberated soul or a god would not require the human society for that purpose. As Aristotle has truly said : "He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god." But so long as a man does not rise to a higher level, society is the only medium within which his moral life can develop. Society being thus the indispensable condition of the development of moral life, devotion to it is as indispensable as it is to the *Ideal Self*.

Now another important question suggests itself : What is the relation of Conscience to society ? Has society anything to do with the formation and development of Conscience ? Or is Conscience sufficient by itself, and can live and develop independently of society ? The answer will be negative for the following reasons : The term Conscience is used in different senses by different classes of ethical writers. But we have found in the chapter VII of Bk. I, (C), that Conscience, in its true sense, is the *Rational Self*—the Ideal Self working out its realisation in man ; and we have found also in the previous pages of this chapter that by virtue of the presence of this Ideal Self in him, he is united to society—he is an integral part of it. Thus it is through Conscience that



a man is a part of the social whole : Or we may say that the Conscience which he calls his own, is also the Conscience which is of society. Thus the individual and the social Conscience are *essentially* one and the same. This does not of course signify that the Ideal Self—the Universal Conscience—that works in society and in the universe—is *actually* and *completely* identical with the individual Conscience. The latter is only a partial and imperfect individualisation of the former, just as the individual reason is of the universal. Now, all the principles of duty which are supplied by the Conscience of an individual, and recognised and followed by him, are largely determined by society in which he lives, Or in other words, all the principles of duty which collectively represent his Conscience arise from his connection with the social institutions, or his relationships. Hence his Conscience may be said to be determined also by society. Thus society determines the individual Conscience in two ways : in the first place, the Conscience which is operative in society is the same as operates in the individual ; in the second place, the principles of duty in accordance with which he ordinarily guides his conduct are largely supplied and shaped by society. Therefore, both *ideally* and *actually* the individual Conscience is a product of society. Or more appropriately, the social Conscience is the individualisation of the Universal Conscience—the Ideal Self, whilst the individual Conscience is the individualisation of the social Conscience,—the social Self.

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## Chapter II.

### The Rights and Obligations.

**I. Definition of Right :—**According to Leibnitz "Right ( *droit* ) is a *moral power*, as duty is a moral necessity." Paul Janet modifies this definition thus : "Perhaps it would be more correct to call this power ideal, rather than moral. Moral power is a force acting in conjunction with reflection and conscience, an energy, a true activity, like virtue. But right may exist without being exercised : it may exist when the one possessing it is ignorant of it ( as in the case of the unconscious owner of the treasure or as in that of the sleeping child ). We have here a power which is accompanied neither by energy, nor by effort, nor by action, yet which arrests me just as effectually as if it were a physical force equal to my own. This power consists simply in an *idea*—the idea that a certain object does not belong to me, that a certain man is my fellow-creature. This is an *ideal* power, and this ideal power is what I call the right." ( *Theory of Morals*, p. 213 ). Prof. Dewey defines right in a similar way. "That which, taken at large or in a lump, is called freedom," says he, "breaks up in detail into a number of specific, concrete abilities to act in particular ways. These are termed *rights*." ( *Ethics*, pp. 439—40 ). "A right," says Dr. Bosanquet, "..... has both a legal and a moral reference. It is a claim which can be enforced at law, which no moral

imperative can be ; but it is also recognised to be a claim which ought to be capable of enforcement at law, and thus it has a moral aspect." Thus all right, or at least all "physical right unites the two sides. It both is, and ought to be, capable of being enforced at law." "Rights then are claims recognised by the State, i. e. by Society acting as ultimate authority, to the maintenance of conditions favourable to the best life." (The Philosophical Theory of the State, pp. 202-8).

From these various definitions we may gather that from the view-point of the individual the rights are his *ideal powers* that are essential to the realisation of the best life ; while from that of society they are his *claims* "to the maintenance of conditions favourable to the best life" which are and ought to be "recognised by society and enforced by the State." Thus, the rights are both *powers* and *claims* at the same time viewed from two different standpoints.

**II. The aspects of rights :—**Thus we find from the definition of rights that every right has a twofold reference : as an ideal power it "resides in and proceeds from some special agent, some individual" ; as a claim, "it indicates at least the permission and sufferance of society, a tacit social assent and confirmation ; while any more positive and energetic effort on the part of the community to guarantee and safeguard it, indicates an active acknowledgement on the part of society" that the claim of the individual "is positively in its own interest." A right is, thus, individual and social at the same time. The social character of rights

becomes manifest in the demand that they should be realised in definite or prescribed ways. "A right is never a claim to a wholesale, indefinite activity, but to a *defined* activity ; to one *carried on*, that is, *under certain conditions*. This limitation constitutes the *obligatory* phases of every right. The individual is free : yes, that is his right. But he is free to act only according to certain regular and established conditions. That is the obligation imposed upon him. He has a right to use public roads, but he is obliged to pay taxes, to pay debts, not to harm others in its use, and so on." ( Profs. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 440 ).

### **III. The ultimate foundation of rights :—**

There are several theories with regard to the foundation of rights. We shall consider here only the leading ones.

#### **(a) The theory of "natural rights" :—**

This theory supposes that each man is born with some rights called "natural rights" from which can be deduced all other rights, called "civil rights," i. e. rights recognised by the State, and rights of the State against him. But as these natural rights led men to be hostile to one another, they established a political society with a view to secure their general interests better. This establishment of a compact is the ultimate foundation of all civil rights and obligations. If it is asked why we should respect the civil rights of others, for instance, the payment of taxes, debts, &c., as well as those of the State, for instance, general submission to the law, the reply according to this theory will be that if we fail to do so, we shall directly or indirectly violate the

natural rights of them. Every member of the State has therefore a natural right to the observation of this compact on the part of others, "with a corresponding obligation on his part to observe it." So that whoever violates the law of the State, or disrespects the civil rights of others, indirectly violates this natural right. This way of explaining the basis of all civil rights was prevalent throughout the 17th century and a part of the eighteenth till the rise of the "utilitarian" theory of rights and obligations.

**Criticism** :—This theory is founded upon three presuppositions : (i) there are. "natural rights," (ii) the political society is the result of a contract with a view to a better preservation of those rights, (iii) every member of society has, thus, another natural right "to have this compact observed, with a corresponding obligation to observe it." The second presupposition is, as we have said before, a "historical fiction". With this, therefore, falls the third presupposition. The first still leaves the main question quite unanswered. It simply assumes that there are natural rights, i. e. rights prior to the existence of society, without explaining the "why" of them—without touching the real question, "how there came to be *rights* at all?" As Prof. Green has put it : this theory falls into "the mistake of identifying the inquiry into the ultimate justifiability of actual rights with the question whether there is a prior right to the possession of them. The right to the possession of them, if properly so called, would not be a mere power, but a power recognised by a society as one which

*should exist.* This recognition of a power, in some way or other, as that which should be, is always necessary to render it a right. Therefore when we had shown that the rights exercised in political society were derived from prior 'natural' rights, a question would still remain as to the ground of those natural rights. We should have to ask why certain powers were recognised as powers which should be exercised, and thus became these natural rights." "Political or civil rights, then, are not to be explained by derivation from natural rights, but in regard to both political and natural rights, in any sense in which there can be truly said to be natural rights, the question has to be asked, how it is that certain powers are recognised by men in their intercourse with each other as powers that should be exercised, or of which the possible exercise should be secured." Again, "natural right" as =right in a state of nature which is not a state of society, is a contradiction. There can be no right without a consciousness of common interest on the part of members of a society. Without this there might be certain powers on the part of individuals, but no recognition of these powers by others as powers of which they allow the exercise, nor any claim to such recognition ; and without this recognition or claim to recognition there can be no right." ( Works, Vol. II, pp. 349, 354 ).

(b) **The utilitarian theory of rights** :—The utilitarians do not subscribe to the above historical fiction to account for the origin and justifiability of rights. According to them all rights are *artificial*, i. e.

created by society or the State, and they try therefore to explain them by showing them as "necessary to the fulfilment of man's vocation as a moral being," to the realisation of the ultimate end of human life. But this vocation, this end, according to them, being the attainment of pleasure and avoidance of pain, the justification of the civil rights rests on the fact that they have been found by experience to be the necessary means to that end ; and the reason why we should respect them is that by so doing we attain more pleasure or avoid more pain : "the ground of our consciousness that we *ought* to respect them, in other words, their ultimate sanction, is the fear of what the consequences would be if we did not."

**Criticism** :—The essential value of this theory is that it does not "seek the ground of actual rights in a prior natural right, but in an end to which the maintenance of the rights contributes." It avoids "the mistake of identifying the inquiry into the ultimate justifiability of actual rights with the question whether there is a prior right to the possession of them." The main defect of this theory is that it supposes that the ultimate end to which the actual rights are the means is merely the attainment of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. This is not certainly true. ( For the refutation of this view see Bk. II, Chaps. III—V ). In the second place, this theory fails to explain why we *ought* to respect the rights. The hope of pleasure or the fear of pain may, no doubt, induce us to act in a particular way ; but it cannot make such an act *moral*. An act

prompted by such a motive is rather opposite to what is moral. ( See Bk. II, pp. 65—66 ). Thus, if we respect the rights simply for the sake of more pleasure our action may be prudent but certainly not moral. ( See Bk. I, Chap. VII.—*criticism of hedonistic view* ).

(c) **The Eudæmonistic theory of rights :—** Eudæmonism also accounts for the origin and justification of the rights by reference to an end ; but this end, it maintains, is not the attainment of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, but, as we have found, ( see Book II, Chapter VI ), the perfection of the rational self—the complete realisation of the *Summum Bonum*. Or as Prof. Green has put it : “the claim or right of the individual to have certain powers secured to him by society, and the counter-claim of society to exercise certain powers over the individual, alike rest on the fact that these powers are necessary to the fulfilment of man’s vocation as a moral being, to an effectual self-devotion to the work of developing the perfect character in himself and others”. Thus the conception of a right implies the conception of an absolute end. “Without this conception the recognition of a power as a right would be impossible. A power on the part of anyone is so recognised by others, as one which should be exercised, when these others regard it as in some way a means to that ideal good of themselves which they alike conceive and the possessor of the power comes to regard it as a right through consciousness of its being thus recognised as contributory to a good in which he too is interested. No one therefore can have a right except (1) as a mem-



ber of a society, and (2) of a society in which some common good is recognised by the members of the society as their own ideal good, as that which should be for each of them. The capacity for being determined by a good so recognised is what constitutes personality in the ethical sense ; and for this reason there is truth in saying that only among persons, in the ethical sense, can there come to be rights ; ..... Conversely, every one capable of being determined by the conception of a common good as his own ideal good, ..... in other words, every moral person, is capable of rights ; i. e. of bearing his part in a society in which the free exercise of his powers is secured to each member through the recognition by each of the others as entitled to the same freedom with himself. To say that he is capable of rights, is to say that he ought to have them, in that sense of 'ought' in which it expresses the relation of man to an end conceived as absolutely good, to an end which, whether desired or no, is conceived as intrinsically desirable. The moral capacity implies a consciousness on the part of the subject of the capacity that its realisation is an end desirable in itself, and rights are the condition of realising it. Only through the possession of rights can the power of the individual freely to make a common good his own have reality given to it. Rights are what may be called the negative realisation of this power. That is, they realise it in the sense of providing for its free exercise, of securing the treatment of one man by another as equally free with himself, but they do not realise it positively, because their possession does not

imply that in any active way the individual makes a common good his own. The possession of them, however, is the condition of this positive realisation of the moral capacity, and they ought to be possessed because this end ( in the sense explained ) ought to be attained."

"The capacity, then, on the part of the individual of conceiving a good as the same for himself and others, and of being determined to action by that conception, is the foundation of rights ; and rights are the condition of that capacity being realised. No right is justifiable or should be a right except on the ground that directly or indirectly it serves this purpose. Conversely every power should be a right, i. e. society should secure to the individual every power, that is necessary for realising this capacity." ( Works, Vol. II, pp. 347—53 ).

Thus, the eudaemonistic theory of rights contains in it what is true, and repudiates what is false, in the other theories. It agrees with the theory of "natural rights" in that the rights are not artificial, i. e. arbitrary creations of law or custom ; and with the utilitarian theory of rights in that "there are no rights antecedent to society, none that men brought with them into a society which they contracted to form". Yet, it differs from both in maintaining that the justification of rights cannot be accounted for by reference either to (i) the natural rights, or (ii) an end which is nothing but attainment of pleasure or happiness, inasmuch as the conception of the former is a contradiction, whereas that of the latter is erroneous, or at least imperfect. The true foundation of rights is the conception of the

absolute end of human life to which they are necessary means ; and in this sense only they may be called "*innate and natural*".

**IV. The classification of rights** :—We have found above that the rights may be viewed from two standpoints—from the standpoint of "the social organisation which secures and enforces them ; or from the standpoint of the individual who exercises and acknowledges them." From the former standpoint the rights are called *civil* and *political* ; and from the latter they may be conveniently divided into two classes, *physical* and *mental*. We shall deal with the individual rights first.

(A) **The individual rights** :—(a) **The Physical rights** :—These rights are primarily three : *rights to life, limb and property*. We have a right to live inasmuch as only by living we can realise the ultimate end of our life—we can fulfil our vocation. We have found that the supreme Good which we are to realise is a *personal* good ; and a personal good can be realised in and through the life of a person. Hence the right to life is essential to the realisation of the supreme Good. Or we may express this fact in another way. We have also found that the personal good is the perfection of human life. It is therefore impossible to attain that perfection without having a right to that life. The right to life leads inevitably to the right to the free and unharmed exercise of the body. We cannot live properly unless we possess "the right to free movement of the body, to use its members for any

legitimate purpose, and the right to unhindered locomotion." The right to limb, again, leads to some *negative* rights such as "exemption from homicidal attack, from assault and battery, and from conditions that threaten health in more obscure ways". The famous poet *Kalidas* has, therefore, very truly said : "शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम्," i. e. the (sound and healthy) body is certainly the primary condition of morality and religion.

Again, the right to live leads necessarily to the right to *property*. In order to live we must have the command of all the instruments and materials necessary for the maintenance of the body in a state of sound health, and for the proper and effective use of our powers. "These physical rights to life, limb and property are so basic to all achievement and capability that they have frequently been termed 'natural rights'. They are so fundamental to the existence of personality that their insecurity or infringement is a direct menace to the social welfare. The struggle for human liberty and human responsibility has accordingly been more acute at this than at any other point. Roughly speaking, the history of personal liberty is the history of the efforts which have safeguarded the security of life and property and which have emancipated bodily movement from subjection to the will of others." (Prof. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 442).

Still again, the right to life involves the right to *labour*, i. e. to work by means of which property may be earned. The right of life cannot be said to be secured unless the means of earning livelihood also are secured.

We have found that the right to life is fundamental right. This does not imply that under no circumstances life should be sacrificed. Man is an integral part of the social whole ; the social good is thus his good : so that when the social good most urgently requires the sacrifice of his life, he will be justified in sacrificing it. Hence the justification of martyrdom.

Although the physical rights are thus the most important rights, they are not recognised and secured to individuals by society to such an extent as they ought to be. Though the social evolution has done much in the direction of "release from distinct and overt tyranny", it has not done enough for the improvement of their positive side. No doubt, many barbarous practices such as exposure of children, massacre of the captives in war, duelling, and other kinds of manslaughter, have been abolished in the modern civilized societies ; but war, which is the most powerful engine of manslaughter, still remains unabolished. Of course, in all instances war is not objectionable. It is morally justifiable only in those rare instances in which the safety and the moral progress of society most urgently demand it. But in most cases it is resorted to for the realisation of mean motives, and therefore should be positively condemned. But in any case the tendency of society should always be to avoid it as much as possible ; and to attain the results supposed to be attainable by it, by having recourse to other peaceful and laudable means. The capital punishment is another instance which also seems to put a limitation to the right of life. Is the capital punish-

ment justifiable ? Some think that it is justifiable, while others entertain the opposite view. Prof. Mackenzie remarks : "The right of life, like all rights, brings an obligation with it—viz. the obligation of treating life, both one's own and that of others, as a sacred thing. He who violates obligation e. g. by murder—forfeits the right of life, and may legitimately be deprived of it." ( Manual, p. 297 ). "While one", observes Prof. Dewey, "may cite capital punishment to enforce, as if in large type, the fact that the individual holds even his right to life subject to the social welfare, the moral works the other way to underline the failure of society to socialize its members, and its tendency to put undesirable results out of sight and mind rather than to face responsibility for causes." He goes further and observes : "The same limitation is seen in methods of imprisonment, which, while supposed to be protective rather than vindictive, recognises only in a few and sporadic cases that the sole sure protection of society is through education and correction of individual character, not by mere physical isolation under harsh conditions." ( Ethics, p. 443. ) Thus, Prof. Mackenzie unreservedly justifies capital punishment, while Prof. Dewey seems to entertain a different view. The latter's view seems to be the correct one for the following reasons : Here the main question to be considered is, whether the end of justice is subserved, or the well-being of society is attained, more satisfactorily by capital punishment or by any other means sufficiently rigorous, but short of it. It must be admitted that the ultimate end of all punishment should

be the protection and safety of society, and it is difficult to understand how these can be secured unless the life of individuals is also secured. We have found in the previous chapter that society is an organism ; that each man is an essential member of it ; and that the good of society is also the good of each member. Now, by taking away the life of a member, society cuts off an essential part of its own life ; by putting an absolute stop to the realization of the man's nature, it substantially injures its own good. Again, as an integral part of the social organism, each man has a *unique* position and function in that organism, and therefore cannot be replaced by any other man or anything else in the whole world. Hence by putting an end to his life society creates a gap in its constitution that can by no means, be completely filled up—a defect that cannot be completely removed. It may, of course, be contended that when a part, for instance a murderer, becomes dangerous to the safety of the whole, it should be permanently removed. This may be true in the extreme cases where all attempt to restore it to its normal or less offensive state fails. Therefore instead of removing the part altogether “out of sight and mind,” society should take to all possible means to educate and correct its character, and thereby to make it less dangerous and more useful to others. Education and correction, not annihilation, should, therefore, be the guiding principle of society. We shall consider this point further when we shall deal with the theory of punishment.

In order to the security of life the civilized societies

have, no doubt, done much by abolishing the blood feud, infanticide, killing the economically useless and aged persons, legalized slavery, serfdom, "the subjection of the rights of wife and child to the will of husband and father," &c. But, on the other hand, they have done little to prevent many modern industries that are conducted more for momentary gain than for the security of life, the consequence of which is that "the annual roll of killed, injured, and diseased in factory and railway practically equals the list of dead and wounded in a modern war."

In order to prevent poverty, the civilized societies have, no doubt, done much by providing "assistance and remedial measures, poorhouses, asylums, hospitals, &c. But, on the other hand, they have failed to take measures to prevent the causes of 'such wholesale poverty and widespread misery.' " "Taken in conjunction with the idleness and display of the congested rich, it raises the question how far we are advanced beyond barbarism in making organic provision for an effective as distinct from formal, right to life and movement. It is hard to say whether the heavier indictment lies in the fact that so many shirk their share of the necessary social labour and toil, or in the fact that so many who are willing to work are unable to do so, without meeting recurrent crises of unemployment, and except under conditions of hours, hygiene, compensation and home conditions which reduce to a low level the positive rights of life. The social order protects the property of those who have it ; but .....it takes little heed to see that great



masses of men get even that little property which is requisite to secure assured, permanent, and properly stimulating conditions of life. Until there is secured to and imposed upon all members of society the right and the duty of work in socially serviceable occupations, with due return in social goods, rights to life and free movement will hardly advance much beyond their present largely nominal state." ( Profs. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, pp. 444—45 ).

(b) **The mental rights** :—These rights are closely connected with the physical rights. By themselves the latter have no meaning , and they acquire meaning when they "subserve purposes and affections"—when they become means to the fulfilment of the former ; the former, again, can fulfil themselves only in and through the latter. Physical conditions are indispensable means to the mental well-being. As Prof. Dewey has truly said : "These conditions affect the execution of purposes and wants ; and this influence reacts to determine the further arrest or growth of needs and resolutions. The sharp and unjustifiable antithesis of spiritual and material in the current conception of moral action leads many well-intended people to be callous and indifferent to the moral issues involved in physical and economic progress. Long hours of excessive physical labor, joined with unwholesome conditions of residence and work, restrict the growth of mental activity, while idleness and excess of physical possession and control prevent mind, as surely as these causes modify the outer and overt acts." ( *Ethics*, p. 445 ).

The first and foremost mental right is the right to *freedom* of thought and action. This is because a man can realise the ideal of his life—can attain the perfection of his nature by free thought and activity, by the free exercise of his will. Spiritual freedom is as essential to the fulfilment of a man's vocation as physical freedom. Hence any "disbelief in the integrity of mind, assertion that the divine principles of thought and love are perverted and corrupt in the individual," as, for instance, the Christian doctrine of eternal sin of man, is as dangerous and prejudicial to the development of human nature as any serious infringement of the physical rights. But society has been much slower to recognise and secure this right than the physical. "Gradually, however, free speech, freedom of communication and intercourse, of public assemblies, liberty of the press and circulation of ideas, freedom of religious and intellectual conviction (commonly called freedom of conscience), of worship, and to some extent the right to education, to spiritual nurture, have been achieved. In the degree the individual has won these liberties, the social order has obtained its chief safeguard against explosive change and intermittent blind action and reaction, and has got hold of the method of graduated and steady reconstruction. Looked at as a mere expedient, liberty of thought and expression is the most successful device ever hit upon for reconciling tranquility with progress, so that peace is not sacrificed to reform nor improvement to stagnant conservatism." (Ibid, p. 446). Of course it should be remembered that liberty is not license ; and

when we speak of the right to liberty we do not mean to say that a man should be allowed to do as he pleases. As we have found above, ( see Bk. II, chap. X ), absolute liberty is a meaningless expression, and even inconceivable. So that the right to freedom really means "the right of having the free development of one's life as little interfered with as is possible, consistently with the maintenance of social order."

The mental right next in importance is the right to *education*. By proper education and culture, or giving due exercise to the powers of the mind we can realise the rational self. It is through education that the right of thought and affection becomes effective. For this reason every social institution worth the name should be a centre of education ; and therefore the final value of it should consist in its educational influence ; i. e. the institutions ought to be "measured morally by the occasions they afford and the guidance they supply for the exercise of fore-thought, judgment, seriousness of consideration, and depth of regard". But society has recognised and secured this right, like other rights, only tardily and imperfectly. Even in the civilized societies the highest kind of education is restricted to the few and inaccessible to the many.

(B). **The social rights** :—We have found that the rights may be viewed from two different standpoints—from the standpoint of the individual and from the standpoint of the social or public order. But the public order, again, may be viewed from two standpoints : it may be viewed as a *Civil Society*, or as a *State*. Regarded

simply as a member of a civil society the individual has some rights which are called *civil rights* ; and regarded simply as a member of the State he has some rights that are called *political rights*.

(a) **The Civil rights** :—Being a member of society, every individual is brought, by his actions, into definite relations with others : some of these relations are recurrent, some are stable ; and these relations may be definitely formulated and enforced. They are defined in the *civil rights*. “They express the guaranteed and regular ways in which an individual, through action, voluntarily enters into association, or combination with others for the sake of a common end. They differ from *political rights* and obligations in that the latter concern modes of social organization which are so fundamental that they are not left to the voluntary choice and purpose of an individual. As a political being, he must have political relationships, must be subject to law, pay taxes, &c.” ( Profs. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 452 ). The relations into which an individual is brought by his actions are so numerous and variable that we shall consider here only those which are morally most important.

(i) **Contract-rights** :—These rights arise out of “express or implied agreements of certain agents to do or refrain from doing specific acts, involving exchange of services or goods to the mental benefit of both parties in the transaction. Thus, whenever a bargain is entered into, something is bought or sold. an explicit or implied contract is entered into. Every genuine and free con-

tract implies three things : each party to the contract should secure what he wants ; the parties should help each other in securing the benefits wanted ; and “the vast, vague, complex business of conducting social life is broken up into a multitude of specific acts to be performed and of specific goods to be delivered, at definite times and definite places.” ( Ibid, pp. 452—53 ). These rights are so essential to the conduct of social life—even to the existence of society—that some social moralists, as Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, &c. supposed that the State originated in a “social contract.” ( See the preceding chapter ).

But the right of contract is not absolute. We cannot enter into any contract we like. That contract is good which is consistent with the supreme end of life. For this reason we are not at liberty to enter into such contracts that are positively *immoral*. For instance, we are not at liberty to contract ourselves into slavery, prostitution, &c.

(ii) **Rights involved in the permanent voluntary associations** :—There are more far-reaching and stable rights that arise out of more permanent voluntary associations such as partnerships, corporations, guilds, trades unions, churches, schools, colleges, clubs, &c. There are some other rights which are connected with some most significant associations—associations that are made for generic ends. The *marital rights* are instances in point. The institution of marriage, which gives birth to these rights, is a kind of “union for mutual economic and spiritual goods

which are coextensive with all the interests of the parties. In its connection with the generation and rearing of children, it is a fundamental means of guarding all social interests and of directing their progress." (Ibid, p. 453).

(iii) **Right to use of courts** :—The highest civil right in which all other civil rights have their ultimate application and test is the right to get the settlement of conflicting rights and the remedy for infringed rights by appeal to a public authority. Every civil right is merely nominal, if there is no effective method to enforce it in the case of its not being recognised, and to remedy or redress it in the case of its infringement. Not only cases of deliberate conflict of rights frequently occur, but also there occur cases of conflict in which the parties are well-intentioned, but the situations are new. Now, if there is no effective method of defining the respective right of the parties in these new situations, each party will assert his own rights arbitrarily and also in good faith : the results will be private contentions. Thus the Courts have two functions to perform. In the first place, they should redress those wrongs which are deliberate. In the second place, they should define the proper scope and limits of those conflicting rights which are ambiguous and ill-defined on account of the novelty of the situations. The latter function of the courts is more valuable than the former.

(b) **The political rights** :—There is no absolute distinction between the civil society and the State. The State denotes "those conditions of social organization and regulation which are most fundamental

and most general :—conditions which are summed up in and expressed through the general will as manifested in legislation and its execution.” “As a civil right is technically focused in the right to use the courts, ‘to sue and be sued,’ that is in the right to have other claims adjudicated and enforced by a public, impartial authority, so a political right is technically summed up in the *power to vote*—either to vote directly upon laws or to vote for those who make and carry out laws.” In a sense, “the representative and potential significance of political rights exceeds that of any other class of rights. Suffrage stands for direct and active participation in the regulation of the terms upon which associated life shall be sustained, and the pursuit of the good carried on. Political freedom and responsibility *express an individual’s power and obligation to make effective all his other capacities by fixing the social conditions of their exercise.* ... .. The evolution of democratically regulated States, as distinct from those ordered in the interests of a small group, or of a special class, is the social counterpart of the development of a comprehensive and common good. Externally viewed, democracy is a piece of machinery, to be maintained or thrown away, like any other piece of machinery, on the basis of its economy and efficiency of working. Morally, it is the effective embodiment of the moral ideal of a good which consists in the development of all the social capacities of every individual member of society.” Therefore, “the moral criterion by which to try social institutions and political measures may be summed up

as follows : The test is whether a given custom or law sets free individual capacities in such a way as to make them available for the development of the general happiness or the common good. This formula states the test with the emphasis falling upon the side of the individual. It may be stated from the side of associated life as follows : The test is whether the general, the public, organization and order are promoted in such a way as to equalize opportunity for all." (Ibid, pp. 473—74, 482—83 ).

(V) **Correspondence of rights and obligations** :—So long we have been dealing with the nature, aspects, conditions and classification of the rights. We are now going to consider their relation to obligations or duties. From what we have said above it is evident that there is perfect correspondence between the rights and obligations ; they are strictly correlative. Their perfect correlation is found both in their external employment and internal nature. The external use of a right requires an obligation on the part of the individual not to interfere with the right of others. No individual is, thus, at liberty to exercise his rights as he likes. He may use his property, but not in such a way as will become a menace or nuisance to the public. He has a right to make use of the public highways ; but he can exercise it on the condition that he will not obstruct or in any way interfere with the exercise of a similar right by others. Hence there are no absolute rights—rights that are not relative to any social order and restriction. But intrinsically rights are



more intimately connected with obligations. The individual has rights, because he is an integral member of society. Every right, as we have found, is *social*. So that it should be exercised only for the realisation of the common good. Thus, every individual is under the obligation of employing his rights in such a wise as will further the progress and promote the well-being of society. Therefore he has a right in as far as he has a corresponding obligation to make use of the right for the public good. But a right gives rise to an obligation not only on the part of the individual possessing the right, but also on the part of others to respect the right. Thus the individual's right to property gives rise to an obligation on the part of others to respect that right, i. e. not to violate it by stealing, confiscating, or destroying the property. Similarly, his right to life brings an obligation upon others not to violate it by murder, &c. In this way it may be shown that every right gives rise to a double obligation at the same time. Rights and obligations are thus perfectly correspondent or correlative. We shall deal with obligations in the next chapter.

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## Chapter III.

### The Duties.

**I. Definition of Duty** :—In all cases the sense of duty arises under some conditions. The human nature, as we have found, is constituted by two elements or factors—*reason* and *sensibility*—the higher or the rational self and the lower or the passional self. These two elements are antagonistic from the beginning. The lower self—the self of impulses or inclinations—supplies the conception of an end which is *direct* and *proximate*, and the attainment of which pleases the self *immediately*. The higher or the rational self, on the contrary, supplies the idea of an end that is *indirect* and *remote*, but higher and more abiding than the direct and proximate end. The natural inclinations impel us in one direction, and reason in another. Hence the conflict. But there is another kind of conflict which is the creature of reason itself. The rational self is not perfect from the beginning. It develops and in the process of its development it passes through higher and higher stages ; and in each stage it acts upon the inclinations, restrains and controls them, and thereby forms more or less permanent desires and habits of thoughts, feelings and actions. But the rational self cannot rest content with these desires and habits for a long time, because they are found wanting when it passes to a higher stage—a stage in which it views the moral situation from a higher standpoint.

Thus the desires and habits which are the creatures of reason come into conflict with reason itself. Hence another conflict. The rational self has to combat two antagonistic forces—the natural and organic inclinations on the one hand, and the habits of thoughts, feelings and actions on the other. *The sense of duty arises in connection with these conflicts.* When the rational self comes to point out a higher end, which stands in opposition to a lower end suggested by the organic inclinations, and habits, and urges the will to act in accordance with that end, a conflict ensues ; and *duty consists in following the right end “as a principle or law which ought to be followed, but which can be followed only by constraining the inclinations, by snubbing and coercing them.”* This conception of duty agrees with its radical meaning : “duty suggests what is due, a debt to be paid ; obligation implies being bound to something—as we speak of ‘bounden duty’. . . . . These ideas suggest there is something required, exacted, having the sanction of law, or a regular and regulative principle ; and imply natural aversion to the requirements exacted, a preference for something else. Hence duty as a conscious factor means constraint of inclination ; an unwillingness or reluctance which *should* be overcome but which it is difficult to surmount requiring an effort which only adequate recognition of the rightful supremacy of the dutiful end will enable one to put forth. ( Profs, Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, p. 339 ).

**II. The sphere of Duty** :—We have found that the source of the sense of duty is the conflict between

the higher and the lower selves—between reason and inclinations whether natural or habitual. This being the case, only the human beings have duties ; and other beings, lower or higher, have no duties. The lower animals which are prompted to actions only by sensations and instincts have no such conflict, and therefore no sense of duty. Similarly, the liberated souls, in whom reason and inclinations have been completely harmonised and consequently the conflict between them has altogether ceased to exist ; and God, who is a perfectly realised being, whose activities are perfectly rational,—in whom reason is an impulse and consequently any conflict between reason and impulse has eternally ceased to exist, are *above duties*. Some maintain that the children also have no duties. But this is not true. The children are not certainly above morality, i. e. above the consciousness of right and wrong. In as far as they are conscious of what is just and what is unjust, there must be a conflict in their mind ; and they, therefore, must be under duties. The phrase “above duties” does not, of course, imply that the beings so qualified are no longer under the moral law. What it really means is that the conflict between the law and impulse has totally ceased to exist in them ; but they are still guided by the law and accomodate their activities to the law as spontaneously as the lower animals do theirs to impulses or sensations. Kant has, therefore, truly said : “A perfectly good will would be equally subject to objective ( i. e. moral ) law, but could not be conceived as obliged thereby to act lawfully. ... ..

Ought is here out of place, because volition is already of itself necessarily in unison with the law." Professor Janet maintains a similar view : "Unquestionably the term duty is unsuitable for expressing a law which the divine nature follows spontaneously, without any constraint ; since God can desire only what is good." ( *Theory of Morals*, p. 229 ). It is now manifest that the sphere of duty is co-extensive with the human life in as far as that life feels the conflict between the higher or rational self and the lower or passional self ; and it transcends the sphere of duty when it passes to a state wherein such a conflict ceases altogether to exist.

**III. The authority of Duty :—**As we have found, the consciousness of duty arises when the self as a whole claims to regulate the partial self of desires and inclinations. Hence the *authority of duty is the authority of the total self over the inclinations and habits*. "A duty, in Kant's words, is a *categorical imperative*—it claims the absolute right of way as against immediate inclination." The claim of duty is thus the claim of the *ideal* over the *actual*. ( See also Bk. II, Chap. VII—*Eudaemonistic view* ).

**IV. The social character of Duties :—**So far we have dealt with duty only on its formal or abstract side. What we actually possess and what claim to regulate habits and inclinations are the *particular concrete duties*. We have found in the last chapter that there is a perfect correspondence between the rights and duties ; that is, each right has an obligation or duty corresponding to it. This correspondence does

not, of course, imply that the duties arise from the rights, or *vice versa*. Both the rights and duties are based upon the supreme end of human life ; the former are essential means to the latter. As Prof. Janet has observed : "I do not admit either that duty is based upon right, or that right is based upon Duty. But duty and right are established at the same time, in the same act, by the same principle, the principle of the essential perfection of the human being—in a word, upon the Dignity of man, on which I am not at liberty to infringe, either in myself or in another." ( Theory of Morals, p. 219 ). But duties do not arise merely in connection with the rights. They arise also in connection with the social institutions and all the relationships into which men enter by their actions. As Prof. Dewey observes : the concrete duties grow "out of the social position or function of the agent, out of *a course of action to which he is committed by a regular, socially established connection between himself and others.*" No doubt, every duty thus arising has a corresponding right, as every right recognised and secured by society has a corresponding duty. For instance, a husband or a parent has peculiar duties by virtue of his peculiar position in society. Similarly, the peculiar position of a doctor, a lawyer, a merchant, a banker, a judge, or other officer of the State, determines his peculiar duties. In this way, every relationship into which a man enters, every position into which a man places himself, is an implicit or explicit contract with others ; and by virtue of that relationship or position he commits himself to a definite line of action.

But besides the relationships and positions that a man voluntarily enters into and occupies there are other more permanent and far-reaching relationships and positions in which he finds himself placed from his birth. Every man is born as an integral member of society ; he lives, moves and has his being in it. Hence the modes of action that are required by these original and acquired relationships and positions express and realise his nature more truly than the habits and inclinations do. We have said before that duty consists in choosing the supreme end of life as suggested by reason in preference to the end as suggested by the habits and inclinations. We now say that duty consists in the socially established modes of actions, i. e. modes of action that are required by our special relationships and positions in society. But there is no real inconsistency between these two assertions. The supreme end of human life is also the supreme end of society—the *Summum Bonum* is *personal*, i. e. the good for all is also the good for each. Therefore, the duties that are socially determined, that arise in connection with the social institutions and relationships, are the only duties that we are required to perform, unless and until they are found to be completely inconsistent with the supreme end of life.

But these two standpoints from which we can view the nature of duties, when regarded each as sufficient by itself, give rise to two distinct theories with regard to the ultimate foundation of duties. So that we shall

next consider these theories and suggest a third which will reconcile them.

**V. The source of Duties or Moral Obligations :—** (I) **The Rigoristic View :—**Kant's view with regard to the ultimate source of duty is based upon his view about the constitution of man. Man has a dual constitution—a rational and a sensuous nature—a higher and a lower self—a self of reason and of appetite. His sensuous nature or appetite supplies ends which are particular, immediate, and have reference only to his personal pleasure or happiness. His higher or rational nature supplies ends that are universal, more or less remote, and have reference to the universal Good. These two classes of ends conflict with one another for supremacy in order to *motivate* actions. But the principle of reason unconditionally demands that the appetites should be expelled or at least checked, and their claim to determine actions should be absolutely denied. Man's duty consists, therefore, in resisting the natural solicitations of the appetites and "accepting the duty of acting *from reverence for duty*." Every action may be performed from two opposite motives. For instance, both a prudent and an honest dealer will not overcharge an inexperienced purchaser ; but the former will do so from a selfish motive and the latter from a disinterested one. Externally viewed, the former's action will, no doubt, be "in accordance with duty" but not "from duty" ; the one will be *expedient*, whereas the other *right*. Therefore, according to Kant, actions performed "from duty", i.e. "with recognition of its authority as



their animating spring", only have moral import. "The idea of good and evil ( in their moral sense ) must not be determined before the moral law, but only after it and by means of it." ( Kant, Theory of Ethics, Abbott's translation, p. 154 ). This moral law which *should* supply the true motive of all right actions comes, therefore, not from the sensuous or appetitive self, but from the higher or rational self ; duty and its authority must spring from reason itself ; and all right action must be performed "from duty for duty's sake."

Dr. Martineau, one of the greatest intuitionists, explains the origin of duty in a different way. The consciousness of duty arises in connection with the conflict, not of reason and inclinations, but of the springs of action ; and duty consists in choosing the higher in preference to the lower, their superiority and inferiority being determined by conscience, a unique and inexplicable faculty, at the time of their conflict. Now, if it is asked how do we know that our duty consists in choosing the higher and rejecting the lower spring of action, the reply, according to him, will be that our duty lies in the choice of that spring of action which has the higher moral worth in preference to that which has the lower. Thus conscience is the basis of the law of duty.

Thus according to both Kant and Dr. Martineau the essential condition of the consciousness of duty is the consciousness of a conflict between a higher and a lower. But they differ in regard to the nature of the conditioning principles. With Kant the conflict exists between reason and inclinations ; while with Dr. Martineau it

exists between two or more inclinations or springs of action. The difference is fundamental.

**Criticism** :—The merit of Kant's view is that it points out that the law of duty can be deduced from the law of reason only. But its main defect lies in the fact that it separates reason from inclination—the higher self from the lower, thus cutting human nature into parts which are absolutely unconnected and therefore lie side by side without any possibility of interaction. Such a crude conception of human nature is emphatically condemned by modern psychology. The consequence of this crude view is that the conflict between the parts is ever-lasting and any reconciliation is impossible. Kant, therefore, advises us to suppress and expel the inclinations, and guide our life by the law of reason, if we want peace and moral salvation. It is pure *asceticism* which enjoins us to develop one side of our nature and suppress the other. This is equivalent to making reason itself an abstraction and therefore, a non-entity ; or rather destroying both reason and inclinations. The truth is, human nature is an organic synthesis of reason and inclination ; in it reason works out its realisation in and through inclination ; it is neither *simply* rational nor *simply* sensuous : the concrete nature of man is a living organism in which all the great variety of elements is unified into a coherent system ; our conscious life is *continuous* and *unitary*. Such is the testimony of modern psychology. The reason as conceived by Kant being formal, the law of duty that is deduced from it, is likewise formal, i. e. it is that which

cannot explain the concrete facts of our moral life. ( For further criticism of Kant's doctrine see Bk. II, Chap. I, *Moral Reason* ).

The conscience as conceived by Dr. Martineau is equally formal. It is a unique and inexplicable faculty having no organic relation to the self—it is something over and above the self—it is something superadded to the self ; but is not necessarily related to man's will and character ; it is the organ of God in man : it is therefore something *external* to the self, so that the law of duty deducible from it is likewise external. This being the case, our obedience to such an external law will not constitute morality, for morality consists in free obedience to a self-imposed law. ( For further criticism see book II, Chap I, *General Review of Intuitionism* ).

**(2) Hedonistic view :—**The egoistic hedonists repudiate the very word duty. As every man naturally and spontaneously seeks his pleasure and therefore follow that desire which brings pleasure, it is useless and even absurd to tell him that he *ought* to satisfy that desire, that it is his duty to act in accordance with that desire. Where there is no freedom, but only necessity, there cannot be any morality. If man is merely a sentient animal, it is absurd to regard him, as to regard any lower animal, as having a sense of morality and duty. To obviate these inconsequences of Egoism, the *utilitarians* maintain that though man naturally follows the pleasant desires, that though the *natural end* of his actions is always the attainment of his personal pleasure and the avoidance of his personal pain, yet, the *moral*

end of his actions should always be the attainment of *universal* pleasure—the production of pleasure in others. Thus, according to them, there are *two* ends of action,—*personal* pleasure and *universal* pleasure. The latter is superior to the former, and *should* always prevail when there is a conflict between them. The sense of duty arises in connection with this conflict ; and duty consists in constraining the individual end when it seeks supremacy, in order to let the universal end have its way. But man is not naturally prone to surrender the former to the latter,—to sacrifice his own pleasure to the pleasure of others. The antagonism between these two classes of end exists from the beginning. How is, then, any reconciliation between them possible ? How can there be any possibility of the selfish end giving way to the altruistic end at the time of their conflict ? The utilitarians do not recognise the existence of any higher principle in human nature for their guidance and reconciliation. They, therefore, resort to some external forces, and suppose that they are the only agencies which reconcile and are capable of reconciling these antagonistic ends, i. e. of making “him find his personal pleasure in that which conduces to the general welfare.” These external agencies are called by them “*sanctions*”. “These influences are the expectations and demands of others so far as they attach consequences in the way of punishment, of suffering, and of reward and pleasure, to the deeds of an individual.” That is to say, when his natural inclination prompts him to seek his personal pleasure these external influences check it by threaten-

ing him with the infliction of greater pain and when his natural aversion impels him to avoid a certain personal pain, they check it by holding to him the hope of a reward of greater pleasure. "In such cases, we have the fact of duty or obligation. There is constraint of first inclination through recognition of superior power, this power being asserted in its expressly declared intention of rewarding and penalizing according as its prescriptions are or are not followed." ( Profs. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 353 ).

Bentham prefers the word 'sanctions' to the word duty ; and explains the consciousness of moral obligation or duty in the way described above. For a full account of his doctrine see Book II, pp. 58—60.

Dr. Bain agrees with Bentham in as far as the basis of his theory is concerned. He observes : "The proper meaning, or import, of the terms ( duty, obligation ) refers to that class of action which is enforced by the sanction of punishment." ( *Emotions and Will*, p. 286 ). But he differs from Bentham in laying emphasis more on the "gradual and subtle processes of family education than on the "political legislation and the force of vague public opinion". For a full account of his doctrine see Book I, pp. 153—54.

Herbert Spencer, like Bentham, lays emphasis on the controlling influences of the sanctions ; but lays more stress on the *internal changes* produced by the constant subjection to those pressures throughout the whole period of human evolution. For a full account of his doctrine see Book II, pp. 101—109.

**Criticism** :—The merit of the above theory is this:

“The utilitarian account of the development of the consciousness of duty or its emphasis upon concrete facts of social arrangements and education affords a much-needed supplement to the empty and abstract formalism of Kant.

(i) The individual is certainly brought to his actual recognition of specific duties and to his consciousness of obligation or moral law in general through social influences. Bain insists more upon the family training and discipline of its immature members ; Bentham and Spencer more upon the general institutional conditions, or the organization of government, law, judicial procedure, crystallized custom, and public opinion. In reality, these two conditions imply and re-inforce each other. It is through the school of the family, for the most part, that the meaning of the requirements of the larger and more permanent institutions are brought home to the individual ; while, on the other hand, the family derives the aims and values which it enforces upon the attention of its individual members mainly from the larger society in which it finds its own setting. (ii) The later utilitarianism, in its insistence upon an ‘internal sanction’, upon the ideal personal, or free facsimile of public authority, upon reward for ‘intrinsic consequences’, corrects the weak point in Bentham ( who relies so unduly upon mere threat of punishment and mere fear of pain ) and approximates in practical effect, though not in theory, Kant’s doctrine of the connection of duty with the rational or ‘larger’ self which is social, even if individual.” But, “even in its revised version utilitarianism did not

wholly escape from the rigid unreal separation between the selfhood of the agent and his social surroundings forced upon it by its hedonistic psychology." (Ibid, pp. 360—61).

The main defect of the theory lies in the erroneous supposition that human nature is *purely sentient* and does not, therefore, contain any higher principle to reconcile the selfish and altruistic ends. Hence its attempt to resort to external influences called by them "sanctions." For the criticism of this doctrine of "sanctions" see Book II, pp. 55—69).

**(3) Eudæmonistic view** :—We have found above that both the rigoristic and the hedonistic theories have failed to account for the true foundation of duty. Kant has erred in holding that the ultimate foundation of duty is the formal self which is absolutely antagonistic to the inclinations and habits, thus making the principle of duty itself formal and empty, i. e. incapable of explaining the concrete moral life. Hedonism, on the other hand, has erred in maintaining that the real sources of duty are some external influences called "sanctions" which have no organic relation to the self, thus reducing duty or moral obligation to merely external "coercion", and "ought" to "is" or "must". The truth lies in the reconciliation of these two theories, which, when examined closely, are found to represent only two sides of the same thing. The real source of duty is the *Ideal or Rational self* of man which works out its realisation, or strives to regain its perfection by controlling and harmonising the natural inclinations with itself, and thereby to make the imperfect,

disharmonious and self-inconsistent human nature gradually perfect, harmonious and self-consistent. Again, the physical nature and society are not absolutely foreign to the human nature. The latter is a part and parcel of the former. The same Ideal or Rational Self works in both. Thus, though the principles of duty emanate from the Ideal Self, they cannot be fully acted upon in actual conduct unless and until the natural inclinations and habits which oppose them are gradually controlled and harmonised with them by the influences of society and family education. Without such education and influences our moral life will remain barren and stagnant. They are, therefore, essential aids to its development. But this development like any other development consists in a conflict between the higher and the lower, between the ideal and the actual, between the supreme end of our life as suggested by reason and the particular and immediate ends as suggested by the inclinations and habits ; and in the gradual subordination of the latter to the former. Thus the conflict in which the sense of duty originates is a necessary accompaniment of a *growing* self. Hence Spencer's assertion that "the sense of obligation diminishes as the moralisation increases" is true, if true at all, of only "an exhausted and fossilized self" which is not, at least, the *human* self. So long as the self remains human, there must be a conflict between the actual and the ideal—the actually realised stage of the self and its goal. To keep this struggle alive is therefore one of the fundamental conditions of moral development. The life where there is no such



conflict or struggle is either a brutish or a divine life. And this struggle is kept largely by the social influences and family education. As Prof. Dewey truly observes : "*The value of continually having to meet the expectations and requirements of others is in keeping the agent from resting on his oars, from falling back on habits already formed as if they were final.* The phenomena of duty in all their forms are thus phenomena attendant upon the expansion of ends and the reconstruction of character."

**VI. The Duty and Duties** :—To avoid misunderstanding we should carefully remember the distinction between the supreme duty and the particular, concrete duties. In reality there is only *one* duty ; it is the absolute and ultimate duty—the duty "*to realise the rational self*" of both an individual and others—the duty "to seek the absolutely desirable, the ideal of humanity, the fulfilment of man's vocations." But, yet, we speak of ourselves as having particular concrete duties, particular rules or laws for the guidance of our conduct, particular definite commandments to be obeyed. What is the relation between this absolute duty and the particular duties ? The absolute duty points out supreme end or good of our life and imperatively commands us to realise it ; but does not directly and definitely tell us how that end can be realised ; what are the means essential to its realisation. The particular duties have been found, according to the hitherto experience of men, to be those essential means. So that the observance of these particular duties is as unconditionally binding

upon us as "the pursuit of the end to which this observance is a means, *so long as it is such a means.*" In all societies the important concrete duties are usually expressed in the form of definite rules or laws called the *moral laws*, or in the form of *commandments*, such, for instance, as the ten commandments of the Old Testament. With these necessary remarks we now proceed to deal with the concrete duties.

**VII. The classification of Duties :—**From the relation between the rights and the duties considered in the last chapter it is obvious that the classification of the duties will correspond to that of the rights. So that we shall classify duties in the following way.

**A. The Individual Duties :—(1) The Physical Duties :—**Corresponding to the three physical rights, viz. the rights to life, limb and property, we have three physical duties, viz. the respects for life, limb and property.

(a) **Respect for life :—**The duty called respect for life arises in connection with the right of life. This duty is expressed in the form of a commandment—"*Thou shalt not kill*". The scope of this commandment is much more comprehensive than what it appears to be at first sight. It does not mean merely that we should maintain simply passive abstinence from destroying other's life. It includes also abstinence from any kind of action that may possibly injure, in any way, the physical well-being of others. For instance, the insufficient feeding of the persons under our care, the unjust control of the sale or other kind of distribution of things

necessary for the physical well-being, any action which affects the health of others, will also fall within the scope of this commandment. It includes also the care of our own life, and the abstinence from anything that may possibly injure it. Though this commandment is usually expressed in a *negative* form, it may be expressed also in a positive form. "Thou shalt not kill" is equivalent to "*Thou shalt preserve or respect life*". In its negative form it simply enjoins us that we should not commit murder, or do anything that may likely injure the life of ourselves as well as of others. In its positive form it enjoins that we should *save* the life of ourselves and of others when in danger of being destroyed, and do all that is necessary for its preservation as far as lies in our power. This is one of the fundamental duties, because preservation of life is a necessary condition of the realisation of the rational self,—of the fulfilment of man's vocation as a moral being.

Though at first sight this commandment appears to be absolutely uncompromising, it is not really without any exceptions. We have found in the last chapter that *martyrdom*, legitimate and inevitable war, capital punishment in extreme cases, are the instances of such exceptions. Here we shall consider another point, viz. *the case of suicide*. At the outset we should distinguish two kinds of suicide : suicide committed for a narrow, ignoble, selfish end, and suicide committed for a broad, noble, altruistic end. The latter is usually called *martyrdom* and is justifiable for reasons described in the last chapter ; the former is suicide in its ordinary sense and

is to be considered here. Is it justifiable? Some writers think that it is justifiable in some exceptional cases, while others condemn it unreservedly. We shall consider these two views before we draw our own conclusion.

(i) In ancient times the Stoics and the Epicureans defended the moral possibility of suicide. They regarded the freedom of man to destroy life when it has no longer any value as his prerogative. Many distinguished men used their freedom for that purpose. "The liberal philosophy of modern times shows the same general tendency." In his essay on suicide Hume describes the circumstances in which suicide may be justified. His argument may be summarised as follows: By suicide we do not violate our duty either to God, or to our neighbours, or to ourselves. It is not a violation of our duty to God, because, if it were really so simply for the reason that it would violate His law, the preservation of life also would be such a violation. If we transgress the law of God by killing ourselves, we also transgress His law by turning the natural course of a stone which is falling upon our head. If it is said that the natural tendency of our nature is not to destroy, but to preserve ourselves, one may reply: if I do not feel such a tendency at the time of suicide, as every suicide really does, it is a sufficient proof that I am no longer required by God to preserve my life. Nor is it a violation of our duty to our neighbours and to ourselves: a man "who is not bound to life by social ties of any sort, who has neither wife nor family, who is 'without friends, money, trade, or the hope of acquiring them' is really a burden upon them ;

so that he will not injure anybody, will do no wrong, if he lays down the burden and thereby cuts short his miseries. On the contrary, that will be the only way in which he can be useful to society and set "an example of how every one has the power of freeing himself from misery."

Dr. Paulsen observes : "Indeed, I do not believe that we must necessarily regard self-preservation as a duty, and voluntary death as a violation of duty." Then, after defending martyrdom or sacrifice of life for the good of society, he proceeds to remark : "But even when a man commits suicide in order to leave a life that has become intolerable, I have not the courage absolutely to condemn the act. When a man who has met with reverses or has been disappointed gives up like a coward, leaving his family in misery and want, we have a right to judge him harshly. But when a man can no longer endure a hopeless and painful malady, when he feels that every body is tired of him and would be materially benefited by his going, the impartial judge will view the case differently. True, we say : it is grand and ennobling for a person to bear great sufferings in patience ; we admire the hero in his suffering as much as the hero in battle. But heroism is not a duty, it is meritorious to be a hero, but it is human not to be one. We cannot withhold our sympathy from one who sinks beneath his load, or forget the word of charity : 'He that is without sin let him cast a stone.' If a man says, Suicide is suicide, and as such reprehensible, we cannot argue with him ; his own feelings will contradict

him in the given case." "It is usually said that suicide is the result of *cowardice*. Cases undoubtedly occur in which this is so. A man without the power to act and to suffer meets with a misfortune ; he loses his head and sees no other escape but the rope, while a brave and energetic man would have overcome the difficulty with patience, and would have begun life anew." "But there is suicide that is committed after careful deliberation and with courage, as in the case of Themistocles. This class of the suicide would scarcely listen to the 'statements such as are found in Schopenhauer or the Neo-Platonists, that flight from life is flight from suffering ; that suffering, however, is the necessary means of deliverance from the will-to live.' They will perhaps answer : 'We are so free from the will to live that we are about to leave life, without feeling the slightest desire to renew it.' ..... "Nevertheless, I do not think that the condemnation of suicide is utterly groundless. If we consider, not the exceptions, but the rule, we must regard suicide as an act by which the suicide himself condemns his entire life : it is, as a rule, the ignoble end of an ignoble life. The wages of sin is death ; the words of the apostle are surely applicable to self-destruction. There are exceptions, perhaps numerous exceptions, but they do not disprove the rule. The popular judgment is the result of experience : Suicide is the natural conclusion of a sinful life." After considering the statistics of suicide committed in different countries, he, then, goes on : "we observe that suicide, as a rule, marks the end of a mentally, bodily, morally,

economically, or socially deranged life. .... Thus suicide is a symptom and criterion of morally-diseased conditions." ( Ethics, pp. 588—91 ).

**Criticism** :—Most of the above argument are based upon the consideration of the extraneous circumstances of the suicide. We are to consider here the moral possibility of suicide ; and in considering this we should consider whether by suicide we violate any of our duties, and ultimately the supreme duty, viz. the realisation of the supreme good of life. So that if there is any consideration on which we can base our view about the moral possibility of suicide, it is the consideration as to whether the destruction of life realises that good better than its preservation even under circumstances most painful and intolerable to the suicide. To decide that we should take into consideration the nature of the supreme good. We have found in the sixth chapter of Book, II, that the supreme good of man is the *universal Good*—it is the good for each and for all ; and this is so because man is an integral part of the universe. Again, further considerations examined in the first chapter of this Book have conclusively proved that a man is an essential unit in the social whole—an inseparable limb in the social organism, so that the social good is his own good, and *vice versa*. It is therefore difficult to understand how a man's activity called suicide may be solely determined by considerations which are entirely selfish, i. e. have no reference either to the well-being of society or that of the universe. A man, who cuts short his life simply to release himself from

miseries, however intolerable they may be, acts simply from selfish motive. It may be his interests to lay down the burden of life, but after all it is purely and simply a selfish interest. And an action done from selfish motive may be prudent, but certainly not moral. Egoistic hedonism is absurd on the very face of it, if morality be a fact. Hume argues that suicide does not transgress any duty either to God, or society, or ourselves. What are these duties? To ascertain them we must understand the true nature of the human self; and we have found that it is organically related to society and God. Hume's whole argument is based upon his hedonistic view of human nature that it is purely sentient; that, therefore, the supreme good for man is the attainment of sensuous pleasure and the avoidance of sensuous pain; that a man is absolutely self-centred and therefore his relation to society is purely accidental. Such being the case, suicide which liberates him from intolerable pain and does not materially affect his connection with society which is purely accidental and can be severed at will, must be regarded right and justifiable. We have already proved the error of hedonistic view; and need not trouble ourselves with it any more. Hume's another curious argument is that as no one thinks it a disturbance of the course of nature and therefore a violation of the law of God, if he turns aside a stone that is falling upon his head, so none should consider so, if he turns "a few ounces of blood from their natural course." But there is a considerable difference between these two cases. In the former, interference



with one law of nature is necessitated by the operation of a counter law of nature, viz. the natural instinct of self-preservation which has been proved to be a universal law by the Biologists ; but in the latter, interference with a law of nature is necessitated, not by the presence of a counter law, but of a *temporary feeling*,—a temporary desire for release from intolerable pain. Again, in the former, interference does not do any harm to nature ; for action and counteraction among the forces of nature are the fundamental conditions of the very existence and development of nature ; while in the latter, interference does a positive and serious harm to nature ; it stops the operation of a universal law for the satisfaction of a particular temporary desire ; it is the sacrificing of the universal to the particular, which is *unnatural* : the former interference is in accordance with the law of nature, while the latter is a violation of it.

Dr. Paulsen has not fared better. In as far as he defends that kind of suicide which is most urgently needed for the good of society or the universe, I agree with him. His defence of that kind of suicide which needed for liberation from intolerable private miseries, &c. is as untenable as Hume's. He himself admits that suicide is, as a rule, "the ignoble end of an ignoble life ; that suicide, as a rule, marks the end of a mentally, bodily, morally, economically, or socially deranged life" ; and that, "thus, suicide is a symptom and criterion of morally-diseased conditions." These expressions evidently show that suicide becomes possible for a man *only* when he loses all higher aim of life and all faith

in the moral order and in God. As Dr. D' Arcy truly observes : "It seems to be a fairly well established fact that nothing drives the unfortunate to suicide so much as loss of faith in god. While a real faith in God remains, life has a sanctity, a value, which no misfortune, or separation from society, can destroy."

(ii Prof. Muirhead, Dr. D' Arcy and others countenance a view which is diametrically opposite to that of Hume and Dr. Paulsen. The defenders of suicide constantly urge the arguments that when a man loses all "social ties" that bind him to life, such as his wife and family, friends, money, trade or the hope of getting them, he is morally justified in putting an end to his life which has become "to all appearance emptied of social significance" ; for "in parting with his life, he is merely parting with his own ; if there is a duty in the matter, it is merely a duty to himself ; there is no duty to society, and therefore society has no right to interfere with what is strictly his own affair." In refutation of such arguments Prof. Muirhead remarks : "no man has a right to take his life, because no man has a life of his own to take. His life has been given him, and has been made all that is by society. He cannot morally part with it without consent of a society which is joint owner with him in it. He carries on his life as a joint concern : he cannot dissolve the partnership without the consent of his partner in it. Perhaps in the case selected society may have shamefully neglected its parts. So far society is wrong, and is responsible for the state to which matters have come, but this does not

absolve the individual from his duty to society. 'Two wrongs do not make a right.' But we may go further and observe, as Prof. Muirhead does, that the human self is, in truth, "the reflection of a moral order" of which the social order is only an individualisation. As Dr. D'Arcy puts it : "the one conception which can imply the good by identifying personal good with common good is the conception of a transcendent principle of unity forming a bond of union among all persons. Such a transcendent principle is the ultimate presupposition implied in the possibility of a universe of personal beings. It is, then, because man must seek the source of his being and his connection with his fellows in his relation with God, that all goods must be identified. The good of each man is the good of every man, because all are one in God. Here is the true answer to the argument for suicide. No matter how separate a man's interests may seem to be from society, they cannot be separated from God. The life of the man is not his own, not because it is society's, but because it is God's ; or rather, it is society's because it is first God's." ( Ethics, p. 124 ).

**Conclusions** :—In fact, there is no real distinction between the view I have put forth in the criticism of the view of Hume and Dr. Paulsen, and that of Prof. Muirhead and Dr. D'Arcy. The real refutation of the argument for suicide consists undoubtedly in showing that a man's life is an integral part of the social and divine life, and therefore indissolubly bound up with the latter ; that this indissoluble bond he has

no right to sever at his will, even under circumstances which are most trying and hopeless to him. Therefore suicide must be condemned whenever it is committed from any egoistic motive however strong and attractive it may be. But it must be admitted that there are instances in which suicide must be thought dignified and morally justified. These instances are those in which the sacrifice of life is most urgently demanded by the well-being of society or the universe. Here the motive is altruistic or universalistic ; a smaller and narrower life is given up for the sake of a larger and wider life ; here destruction of life brings up life—here death means a wider and higher life. These are the only occasions on which a man must die to live. •

(2) **The Mental Duties** :—(a) Corresponding to the right to freedom of thought and action we have the *duty to respect other's freedom of thought and action*. It forbids us to interfere with the free expression of another man's thought and with his free activity ; or in a word with the development of his life, save in so far as that development itself requires such interference. But this commandment does not enjoin passive abstinence only but also active aid. We should aid others in developing their intellectual, moral and spiritual life as far as lies in our power by giving them facilities for free speech, free communication and intercourse, free writings and circulation of ideas, free religious and intellectual convictions, free worship, free education and spiritual nurture, &c. It may be expressed in the negative form, "*Thou shalt not interfere with another's free-*

dom" ; and in the positive form, "*Treat every human being as a person, never as a mere thing.*" It, therefore, forbids slavery, despotism, exploitation, prostitution, and every other form of using another merely as a means to one's own ends. This duty involves also abstinence from the interference with our own personal liberty, and enjoins positive effort to develop our intellectual, moral and spiritual life. So that we cannot, without violating this law, make ourselves a slave, a prostitute, or put ourselves in any other state that improperly limits our liberty ; and make ourselves illiterate, immoral and irreligious, or shut ourselves from intellectual, moral and religious culture. In its positive form, Prof. Mackenzie has called this commandment *respect for character*. He observes : "of course, we might regard this principle as simply an expression of the negative principle of respect for freedom. But perhaps, it is better to regard it as positive : for when we thus have regard for the stage of development in which any one stands, we shall be led not merely to abstain from that which will injure him, but also to do that which will help him. The simplest way of summing up this commandment is perhaps to say in Hegel's words, "Be a person, and respect others as persons."

B. **The Social Duties** :—As the social rights may be divided into two sub-classes, the civil rights and the political rights, so the social duties may be split up into two, *the Civil Duties* and *the Political Duties*.

(I) **The Civil Duties** :—(a) The first commandment under this head is *respect for truth*. This may be

expressed in the negative form, "*Thou shalt not lie*". This rule is very comprehensive, and includes in it abstinence from all kinds of lying either by words or deeds. The lying by words has two applications. In the first place, it signifies that *our actions should conform to our thoughts*. These two explanations of the law are evidently distinct. For instance, if we make a contract which we do not mean to observe, we lie in the *second* sense, because here our words do not conform to our thoughts ; but not *necessarily* in the *first* sense, for we may afterwards fulfil it. Again, if we make a contract that we fail to observe, we lie in the *first* sense, but not *necessarily* in the *second* sense, because we might have made it with the intention of fulfilling it. But yet, these two meanings are related to each other. Our actions are embodiments of our words, and our words are embodiments of our thoughts. So that normally and naturally these three—thoughts, words, actions—should conform to one another ; and if we voluntarily change this normal and natural relation, we evidently violate a duty. Therefore, in its full scope, this commandment means to forbid us to make our thoughts, words, and actions inconsistent with one another. There is, however, another kind of lying. *We may lie also by our deeds*. If we do something in such a way as to show that we mean to do something else, or that we have done something else, which in fact we neither mean to do, nor have done, we lie by our deeds. The duty, *Thou shalt not lie*, may, therefore, be understood fully to mean "that we must always so speak and act as to express as clearly as

possible what we believe to be true, or what we intend to perform ; and that, having expressed our meaning, we must as far as possible conform our actions to it."

The **contract-duties** corresponding to the contract-rights fall under the scope of this commandment. Contracts may be explicit or implicit ; bargaining is an instance of the former kind and buying and selling of the latter kind, of contracts. But, whatever may be the form of contract, this law forbids us to break it. Here an important question suggests itself : are we bound to keep even those contracts which are unjust or immoral ? Are we bound to keep promises to help others in murder, stealing, &c, or contracts by which we make ourselves a slave, a despot, a prostitute, &c. ? The answer must be in the negative. For, as we have found above, a duty is a duty, i. e. binding upon us, so long as it is a means to the supreme end of life ; and therefore the moment it ceases to be such it ceases also to be a duty. The observance of an immoral promise or contract is also immoral, because it obstructs the realisation of the supreme end ; and as such is not our duty at all. The respect for truth does not imply that in order to respect it we must do wrong ; one duty cannot enjoin us to do what is against another duty ; duties being essential means to the same end, viz. the supreme good of life, they cannot be inconsistent with one another. We shall further deal with this point later on.

(b) Corresponding to the rights attached to the permanent voluntary associations we have rather a group

of civil duties which may be collectively expressed by the phrase *respect for social institutions and the various forms of social order*. These duties arise out of our positions and relations in the social organism. Thus, we have duties arising in connection with the family, partnerships, corporations, guilds, trades, unions, churches, schools, colleges, clubs, &c. Perhaps the most important and far-reaching of all civil duties are those which arise from marriage. This collective commandment that we must respect the social order forbids us to interfere needlessly with any established social institution. In its positive form this rule enjoins us to work for its development and reformation if there be any need for them. Thus, this commandment, like every other commandment, is not absolute. We should not *blindly* follow it. No doubt, we have a bounden-duty to respect and protect the social order. Being a living organism it requires development, progress; progress requires suitable and necessary changes; and changes mean reformation. Hence only through necessary and suitable reformation the social organism can live, thrive and progress towards its perfection. Thus we find that we have also a duty to help on this progress as far as lies in our power. Those, who like to see society in a state of stagnation and degeneration, or think that "what is, is the best," and raise a hue and cry against every kind of reformation however needful, are the real enemies to their country.

(c) Corresponding to the right to use of courts there is a duty which enjoins the courts or "*the public authority*



*having general and final jurisdiction" to decide all disputes with regard to rights strictly in accordance with law and equity.* It forbids to have any special respect for any special person, race or nation ; and enjoins to regard all persons, races or nations as perfectly equal. We also have a duty towards the courts and the public authority. We should respect them and their decision and should not try to improperly influence it in order to get unjust decision in our favour.

(2) **The Political Duties** :—The political rights give rise to the corresponding political duties. On the part of the political authorities there are *duties which enjoin them to confer upon the subjects "the power to vote—either to vote directly upon laws or to vote for those who make and carry out laws"* ; to make only those laws which will give the people political freedom and facilities for the effective development of their capacities "by fixing the social conditions of their exercise" ; to see that the laws are strictly and impartially carried out and the people are ruled justly and equitably. The political duties which direct the constituted authorities are numerous. But they may be summed up in a single comprehensive duty, viz. *its aim should always be directed to the well-being of the people.* This duty is more effectively discharged in "a democratically regulated State" than in a State which is "ordered in the interests of a small group, or of a special class." For these reasons, the former is "the social counterpart of the development of a comprehensive and common good ; morally, it is the effective embodiment of the moral

ideal of a good which consists in the development of all the social capacities of every individual member of society." On our part also, there are duties which enjoin us to "honour the king" and all constituted authority ; to respect or abide by the law, to give evidence, when necessary, in order to get those who infringe the law properly punished and even to aid the authorities in detecting the criminals. if such aid is asked for and required.

(c). **Other classes of Duty** :—We have considered the duties towards ourselves and other men living under the same social order. We now propose to consider the other classes of duty. We are not only members of a particular social organisation, but also of the world-system which is constituted by other living things and beings besides ourselves. We are related to them ; and our actions affect them for good or ill. We have thus duties towards them. These duties may be arranged under three heads : (1) *Duty to the lower animals and other living things as plants, &c.*, (2) *Duty to Humanity*, (3) *Duty to God*.

(1) **Duty to plants and lower animals** :—We should not unnecessarily cut or injure plants and trees ; and should take special care for those that we ourselves plant for our own use ; we should see that they get heat, light, air, water and sap of the earth sufficiently for their nourishment and development. We do not usually think that we have any duty to them. But they are also as essential parts of the world-system as we are ; they have therefore special functions in that

system to fulfil. Our duty is, not only to interfere *unnecessarily* with the fulfilment of those functions, but also to help on that fulfilment. But, as we depend upon the plants and trees for our food and therefore, in a sense, for our life, some sort of interference is inevitable ; but this being necessitated by the natural needs of our life, we have a right to that interference. We have a similar duty to the lower animals, We should treat them kindly and considerately. We should take special care for the domestic animals and look to their wants and comforts, because they entirely depend upon us. When we put them to work, we should see that they are not overworked ; and as long as they remain useful to us we should be grateful to them. When they become diseased we should nurse them ; and when become completely unfit for work we should not neglect or drive them away. We should not kill or deprive any animal of its natural liberty simply for the sake of our own private pleasure ; and whether we are justified in killing any in order to use its flesh as food is a delicate question which cannot be discussed in a book like this. But it should be remembered that unless and until it is proved conclusively that animal flesh is indispensably necessary for the proper nourishment of our body, we have no right to slay any of God's creatures for that purpose.

(2) **Duty to Humanity** :—This duty consists in the *respect for the progress of Humanity*. We are not merely members of a particular society, but also of *Human Brotherhood* ; and as such we have a duty to work, as far as we can, for the advancement of that

Brotherhood. We may express this duty, as Prof. Mackenzie has done, in the form of a commandment, "*Thou shalt labour, within thy particular province, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind.*" Carlyle expresses this commandment in this form :—"Know what thou canst work at ; and work at it, like a Hercules." As we shall see, this duty is particularly included in our duty toward God.

(3) **Duty to God** :—We showed in the sixth chapter of Book II that our self is an individualisation or differentiation of the Infinite Self or God ; and that, therefore, our relation to Him is one of the parts to the whole. Our attitude, then, towards Him should be that of the worshiper to the worshiped. Hence our supreme duty to God is *Worship*. What is, then, *Worship* ? It is briefly defined in the *Upanishads* in this way : "तस्मिन् प्रीतिसम्य प्रियकार्यसाधनञ्च तदुपासनमेव," i. e. the love of him and the performance of deeds pleasant to Him are His worship. Hence our duty to God is twofold : we should love him ; and we should do all that is pleasant to Him. But, as we cannot love Him without knowing Him, and we cannot love Him more without knowing Him more, our love of Him involves our knowledge of him, and our ever-increasing love of Him involves our ever-increasing knowledge of Him. And this intellectual love of God results in our sincere devotion to Him and to the works pleasant to Him. Again, the works pleasant to Him being the works that are connected with the due discharge of our duties, we worship Him by doing

our duties—by working for the realisation of the supreme Good which is the ultimate source of all duties. Still again, where there is true love, there is genuine attempt at reconciliation and union ; and we can reconcile ourselves to God and unite with him only in *prayer* and *meditation*. Thus prayer and meditation are two psychological processes by which we can show our genuine love of Him. Furthermore, the love of God involves the love of His creatures. Hence, “the love of God is perhaps most clearly shown by faith in human progress ; and faith in it is shown most clearly by devotion to it.” “All true work is religion.” ( Carlyle ).

**VIII. Definite and indefinite, perfect and imperfect Duties** :—Some writers recognise another kind of distinction among the duties, viz. the distinction of *definite* and *indefinite* duties. The definite duties are those which are “strict and exact, enjoining themselves upon the agent in an absolute manner without leaving any latitude of interpretation—such, for example, as paying a debt, restoring things intrusted to us, not killing any one.” The indefinite duties are those which, “although obligatory like the former, necessarily leave the agent considerable freedom of interpretation and a certain latitude in execution. For example, to cultivate one’s mind is certainly a duty,” but it is not definite, “how, in what way, or up to what point.” It is our duty to give the poor our superfluities ; but it is difficult to decide the question, what is superfluous ? The former class of duties is also called *complete* duties, and is usually regarded as *negative* in character, i. e. “consisting

in doing no evil" ; while the latter, also called *incomplete*, is usually regarded as *positive*, i. e. "consisting in doing good." The former is definite, because it absolutely forbids doing any evil which can be definitely determined ; whereas the latter is indefinite, for the domain of good being infinite, there is no definite criterion by which its limits can be fixed in one place or in another. "Hence, in this case, the rule is, *so far as possible*. In the first, on the contrary, the rule is, *never, not at all, not* to the slightest extent. Here it is absolute : there it is relative. This comes, as we see, from the nature of things." ( Prof. Janet, *Theory of Morals*, pp. 190—91 ). Kant calls the definite duties *Duties of Perfect obligation*, and the indefinite duties *Duties of Imperfect obligation*. Mill places the first under the head of Justice, and makes the remarks about the second : "There are other things, on the contrary, which we wish that people should do, which we like or admire them for doing, but yet admit that they are not bound to do ; it is not a case of moral obligation." ( Utilitarianism, Chap. V ).

**Criticism** :—Superficially considered, this distinction appears to be important ; but when we examine the duties more closely, it is found to disappear. (i) Besides being inconvenient and misleading like the expression "an accomodating conscience," the expression "indefinite duties" is inconsistent with the very nature of duty. We have found above that the particular duties are essential modes through which we realise the supreme good of our life, and as such are strict and

absolutely obligatory upon us. The very conception of duty implies strictness and unconditional obligation. As Prof. Janet has truly remarked : "A duty from which one can release one's self when one wishes, and whose fulfilment one can defer to such time as one pleases ; a duty which one fulfils as one chooses, at one's own time, to the extent one sees fit—all this is inconsistent ..... with the very idea of Duty, as this is generally understood." The same argument can be used *mutatis mutandis* against the expression "imperfect duties".

(ii) Not only so, by analysing and examining the concrete duties we find that the error of this distinction lies in our attributing to *essence* or *form* of duty what really pertains to its *object* or *matter*. Or in other words, this distinction is founded, not upon the nature of duty itself, but upon the nature of the object with which duty is connected. For example, "if the object of Duty is a material object, definite, easily distinguished from one another, having a permanent identity, or a strict nominal value" ; or "if it is a thing which is susceptible of being measured, defined or determined," we can easily ascertain, with precision and exactitude, what the corresponding duty will be. Hence arises the distinction between this class of duties and the other class whose objects are ill-defined, more or less changeable, and incapable of easy measurement. Let us take some illustrations. If I deposit one hundred rupees with a person, it is his duty to return it. Here the duty is as strict and definite as possible. The reason is,

the object (i. e. one hundred rupees) of the duty is perfectly definite. The same is true of a loan. If I lend you some definite thing, it is your duty to restore it to me. Here also the duty is strict and definite. The duty of gratitude is also a strict duty like legal justice. But it is indefinite in its application. I have benefited you in a particular way : you, therefore, owe me gratitude. But what is the proper way in which you should owe it ? This is indeterminate, depending upon the tact and conscience of each individual. Numerous other illustrations similar to these may be adduced, but they are sufficient to show that the definiteness or indefiniteness of duties are due, not to the nature of duties themselves, but to the nature of their objects. We can also show that definite duties become indefinite and indefinite duties definite when their circumstances are changed. Let us consider one illustration : "The duty of doing good to men is an indefinite duty ; because no one can determine *a priori* the when, how, or how much." But it becomes definite when the circumstances become also definite. Suppose a rich man standing before a man dying of hunger. Can you say that his duty to help the latter is still indefinite ? Certainly not. Here he has got a definite duty to help the man just at the time in a definite and effective manner. These considerations, then, subvert the theory that there is a hard and fast distinction between two kinds of duties, definite and indefinite, perfect and imperfect. Take some illustrations from duties to ourselves. The not to destroy our life is a strict and definite duty, because life, which



is the object of duty, is a definite thing which is sharply distinguished from death. The duty not to injure our own health is also a strict duty, since it is a corollary of the preceding. But it is indefinite, for health itself is indefinite, we don't know precisely what health is.

It is sometimes said that definite duties are those that correspond to the recognised rights ; and that the indefinite duties are those that do not correspond to any recognised rights. Thus abstinence from killing or stealing is a definite duty, because it corresponds to the recognised right of life or property ; while charity is an indefinite duty, for there is no such recognised right as the right to the charity of others to which it corresponds. This is true to a certain extent, but not perfectly. What we have said before about duties, may be said exactly about the rights also. The rights, like duties, are sometimes definite and sometimes indefinite. They are definite, when their objects are definite, and indefinite when their objects are indefinite, and again, with the change of their circumstances they change their character. Hence we conclude that the distinction of duties as definite and indefinite, perfect and imperfect, complete and incomplete, though useful to a certain extent, is not absolute.

(iii) The same is the case with the distinction of duties as *positive* and *negative*. It is said that the positive duties are those which consist in doing good ; and that the negative duties are those which consist in doing evil. But the distinction is more apparent than real. In fact almost all the negative duties can be expressed in the positive form and the positive duties in

the negative form. Thus, "*Thou shalt not kill*" can be expressed in the positive form, "*Thou shalt preserve life*"; "*Thou shalt not steal*", in the positive form, "*Thou shalt preserve property*" : conversely, the positive duties may be expressed in the negative form. For instance, "*Be grateful*" may be expressed as "*Do not be selfish*", and so on. The truth is, every concrete duty has two sides, positive and negative ; it enjoins *to do* something and *not to do* some other thing. The duty, whose object is life, enjoins us to do all that preserves or tends to preserve life, and also not to destroy it, or not to do anything which tends to destroy it. Sometimes its positive side is expressed and sometimes its negative, according as the one or the other is prominent.

**IX. My Station and Its Duties—Relative Duties** :—We have dealt with the different classes of duties in a way as if they were independent of the particular circumstances of a man. We have found that there is one supreme duty or law which bids us realise the rational self, and that the concrete particular duties are *mere means* through which we can fulfil that supreme duty. Though the general features of these concrete duties may be formulated or stated in the form of general laws or commandments, their particular features remain untouched and undescribed. These means by which we can attain the supreme good of our life are *unique for each of us*, because each of us is a unique being whose peculiar circumstances, positions and functions cannot be *completely* replaced by those of any other man. As Prof. Mackenzie truly remarks : "Human beings do

not drop from the clouds. Men are born with particular aptitudes and in a particular environment ; and they generally find their sphere of activity marked out for them, within pretty narrow limits. They find themselves fixed in a particular station, helping to carry forward a general system of life ; and their chief duties are connected with the effective execution of their work." ( Manual, p. 328 ). Carlyle emphasizes the same principle when he says, "Do the duty that lies nearest thee". Prof. Bradley has dealt, admirably, with this aspect of duties in his Essay on "My station and its duties." ( Ethical Studies, Essay V ). Thus, the duties of a ruler, a teacher, a state-officer, a lawyer, a judge, a workman, a husband, a wife, a father, a mother, a child, &c. are different from those of men who belong to the opposite categories. Of course, there are some common duties which are equally binding upon all, whatever may be their vocation. For instance, it is the duty of every man not to kill, lie or steal. These common duties are generally formulated in ethics. But there are numerous other duties that are completely determined by the peculiar vocation and circumstances of each individual. Thus each man has three classes of duty : the supreme duty which is universal and absolute ; the duties such as the duties of not killing, lying, stealing, &c. which are general, but not absolute ; and those duties which are strictly particular, because relative to the peculiar circumstances of each individual. Again, the circumstances of a man change from time to time, and so do the duties relative to them. For instance,

the duties of a man alter, at least to a certain extent, when he becomes a husband or a father or an officer of the state, &c. We thus find that some of the duties remain more or less permanent throughout the life, while others change from time to time. But, yet, the last class of the duties are the *prime* duties inasmuch as they are nearest to us ; we are directly and immediately concerned with them. If I am a ruler, my prime duty is to be a good ruler first ; if I am a citizen, I should be a good citizen first, then anything else, and so on.

**X. Conflict of Duties :—**The phrase is apparently inconsistent with the very conception of duty. If by a duty is meant an essential means by which the supreme good of life is attained, it is evident that that means is *definite* in a particular case ; and thus in every case, there being a definite duty, it is impossible that there may be any conflict of duties at all. Yet, we find that there is really such a conflict. What is its cause ? The cause seems to be this : in most instances the duties are expressed in the form of commandments or laws which appear to be universal and absolute. We have found that except the one supreme duty all other duties are mere means and as such cannot be absolute and even strictly, universal. If, then, we make these subordinate laws universal and absolute, they must come into conflict. There is another reason : the laws, which are mere generalisations from particular instances, must, by their very nature, be *abstract* and *general* ; they are capable of explaining only the common features of instances of particular description ; but they cannot

explain their special features, features by which they differ from one another. For example, the law, "Thou shalt not lie" will condemn all instances that have the general features of lying ; but a particular instance of lying may contain other features by virtue of which its nature may altogether alter, and may, therefore, not fall within the scope of the law, i. e. it may not be an instance of lying at all. For instance, if I lie to a robber, to a murderer, to an enemy with arms in hand, I shall not lie at all. though my act may *generally* resemble lying, for here other considerations alter the nature of the act and bring it under the scope of another law, viz. "Thou shalt not steal," or "Thou shalt not kill". In the present instance, the act has two aspects, the aspect by virtue of which it falls under the scope of one law, and the aspect which brings it under the scope of another law ; the act is both lying, stealing or killing at the sametime. Hence arises the conflict. ( For further discussion of this point see BK. I, pp. 145-50 ). Thus we find that the conflict of the subordinate moral rules is inevitable so long as we apply them to all instances of particular description without fully considering all their aspects.

**Casuistry** :—In this connection we shall consider another point. The inevitable conflict among the so-called moral laws has led some writers to an attempt called *casuistry*. *Casuistry is an effort to explain the exact meaning of the moral laws, and to ascertain which of them should yield in the case of a conflict.* It is called so because its main function is to decide *cases of consci-*

*ence.* An attempt of this kind more or less explicit is found in every country. Historically, the word is associated with the teachings of the Jesuits. In India Jaimini's *Mimāṃsā* Philosophy is an attempt of that kind. Prof. Janet has devoted a full chapter to this subject in his *Theory of Morals*, where he has tried to defend it. He writes thus : "An eminent moralist ( J. Simon ) has said that moral science has nothing to do with casuistry, and that the conscience must decide in each special case. But if we were to apply this rule strictly, we should condemn not merely casuistry, but the whole science of practical morals ; for every question of morality is ultimately a case of conscience. The discussion of suicide, of duelling, of homicide for self-defence—all these and a thousand other questions, are questions in casuistry. Undoubtedly it is the conscience which must be the ultimate judge. At the moment of the act, there is rarely time in which to appeal to casuistry ; yet even at this last moment the conscience is frequently undecided, and is forced to consider the *pros* and *cons* as a casuistry would do. But, in order that it may decide with clearness and authority, should it not have been previously enlightened, and prepared to judge, by a general and theoretical discussion, and by a critical comparison between different duties ? ... The whole moral progress of society has been merely the progressive solution of different cases of conscience, brought about little by little by the progress of reason and the development of human relations. This is true of the abolition of slavery, of human sacrifices, of the *auto-da-fe*, of the right

of primogeniture, &c. What are we discussing to-day ? The right of inflicting the death-penalty, divorce, compulsory education, the general obligation to military duty, the right of insurrection, &c. Each of these is a case of conscience." ( Theory of Morals, pp. 243—44 ).

It cannot be denied that there is some force in the argument. In the case of a conflict, the only way by which we can reconcile the conflicting principles is theoretical discussion. But too much discussion, specially for its own sake, without any appeal to conscience, begets sophistry instead of a healthy moral disposition. As Prof. Mackenzie has remarked : "casuistry seeks to draw out rules for breaking the rules—to show the exact circumstances in which we are entitled to violate particular commandments. .... It is bad enough that we should require particular rules of conduct at all, but rules for the breaking of rules would be quite intolerable. They would become so complicated that it would be impossible to follow them out ; and only such attempt would almost inevitably lead in practice to a system by which men might justify, to their own satisfaction, any action whatever." ( Manual, p. 322 ). In fact, the dangers and evils attending this way of viewing the moral life are numerous. The most important of them are these :—(a) *Its general tendency is "to magnify the letter of morality at the expense of its spirit."* It inclines us to pay attention more upon the literal conformity of an act with a rule than upon its positive goodness, the disposition of the agent forming its spirit, or the unique circumstances that contribute its matter. The consequence is that its

scope is narrowed and its depth lessened. "It tempts some to hunt for that classification of their act which will make it the most convenient or profitable for themselves." "With others, this regard for the letter makes conduct formal and pedantic. It gives rise to a rigid and hard type of character illustrated among the pharisees of olden and the Puritans of modern times—the moral schemes of both classes being strongly impregnated with the notion of fixed moral rules." ( Profs. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, pp. 327—28 ). (b) *It takes a legal view of conduct.* As in the legal view our conduct is regulated by externally imposed rules and injunctions, so in the casuistical view, "conduct is regulated through specific injunctions and prohibitions : Do this, Do not do that." (c) "*Probably the worst evil of this moral system is that it tends to deprive moral life of freedom and spontaneity* and to reduce it to a more or less anxious and servile conformity to externally imposed rules. Obedience as loyalty to principle is a good, but this scheme practically makes it the only good and conceives it not as loyalty to ideals, but as conformity to commands.....All systems which emphasize the letter more than the spirit, legal consequences more than vital motives, put the individual under the weight of external authority. They lead to the kind of conduct described by St. Paul as under the law, not in the spirit, with its constant attendant weight of anxiety, uncertain struggle, and impending doom." ( Ibid, pp. 328—29 ). Therefore we should say in the words of Prof. Mackenzie that "the way to escape from the limitations of the command-



ments, is not to make other commandments more minute and subtle, but rather to fall back upon the great fundamental law, of which the particular commandments are but fragmentary aspects."

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## Chapter iv.

### The Virtues.

**I. Duty and Virtue :—**In the chapter before the last we have shown that there is a general correspondence between right and duty, and that every right gives rise to a double obligation or duty, viz. the individual possessing the right has a duty to exercise it properly, and the others have a duty to respect it. In the last chapter the classification of duties showed that there are some duties which do not apparently correspond to any rights ; our duties to plants and lower animals cannot be said to have any correspondence to any rights possessed by them, if by a right is meant a moral power or claim recognised and secured to the individual by society and enforced at law. The same may be said of our duties toward God. Rights and duties are relative to human conditions and are essential means to the supreme end of human life : therefore beings which are below or above that level have neither rights nor duties. Thus the regions of right and duty are not co-extensive. But the case is quite reverse with duty and virtue. Their provinces are absolutely co-extensive. We cannot conceive of a duty which does not give rise to a virtue ; nor of a virtue which is not the effect of the constant fulfilment of a duty. Duty and virtue are two sides of the same thing. Duty is the *external* expression of a good character, while virtue is internal habit of its ex-

precision. Duty is, thus, directly connected with overt act, the external expression of character ; virtue is the habit of a good will, the internal expression of character. From this the relations of duty, virtue and character are obvious. Duty is the activity to realise the supreme end or attain the supreme good of life ; virtue is the habit produced by the constant fulfilment of duty ; and character is the complex group of such habits. Character is usually defined as a set of good habits of will or activity ; each virtue is such a good habit. Again, each good habit of will or activity is the product of constantly acting to attain the supreme good, i. e. of the constant fulfilment of a duty. Thus duty, virtue, and character are interrelated.

The definition of virtue stated above agrees with that given by most of the ethical writers. Prof. Mackenzie says : "The term is employed to denote a good habit of character, as distinguished from a Duty, which denotes rather some particular kind of action that we ought to perform. Thus a man *does* his Duty ; but he *possesses* a virtue, is virtuous." Prof. Dewey writes similarly : "The habits of character whose effect is to sustain and spread the rational or common good are virtues ; the traits of character which have the opposite effect are vices." According to Prof. Muirhead virtue is "the quality of character that fits for the discharge of duty." "Virtues may be defined," says Prof. Paulsen, "as habits of the will and modes of conduct which tend to promote the welfare of individual and collective life." Aristotle also defined virtue as a habit ; but he went

further and observed that virtue is a habit of choice of the mean between two extremes—excess and defect. But it should be remarked in this connection that though Aristotle's maxim is certainly a practical rule and satisfactory in many instances, it should not be regarded as the true definition of virtue.

Thus it is generally admitted that virtue is a good habit of will ; but in what sense virtue is a habit ? As Dr. D'Arcy observes : "though virtue is a habit, it is not habit in the sense in which skill is habit. Though virtue is the fitness of man to attain his proper end, it is not mere capacity, even though that capacity be the result of past conduct. And with this common sense agrees. The virtuous man is not the man who can be good when he likes, he is the man who *is* good, i. e. who *does* good. Virtue is *activity*.....Virtue, then, in the fullest and most exact sense of the term, is *the virtuous will in action*, and, in this sense, virtue is only another name for the "good will". It is the good will generalised. And this is the only sense in which virtue can be said to be good in itself. Here virtue is *quality of character* ; but it is character as dynamical, or in action." ( Short Study of Ethics, p. 172 ). Similar are the observations made by Prof. Janet : "We should not understand habit to mean a mechanical routine, in which the soul itself, by subjecting itself to an exterior rule of discipline, would lose consciousness of what it was doing. We must not forget the maxim : 'The letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive'. It is by the spirit that we must be virtuous, not merely by actions. Thus it is not

an exterior habit, but an internal and moral habit, which is seated in the will and in the heart." (Theory of Morals, p. 413 ).

**II. Virtue and Wisdom :—**We should consider another important definition of virtue. Socrates and Plato held that "*Virtue is wisdom, and vice is ignorance*". This definition is apparently inconsistent with that given above. We have defined virtue as a good habit, and vice as a bad habit, of action or will ; they define virtue as a knowledge of the good, and vice as an ignorance of it. Of course they did not mean to say that "it is necessary to think correctly in order to act well". The real meaning of this definition is that knowledge cannot be separated from action, for if a man really knows the good, he knows also that it is his interest to do it and consequently he cannot but choose it. "The will cannot go against reason, and when it is enlightened it always makes for the good. Its weaknesses and faults are nothing but errors of the intelligence." These conclusions follow from another principle, viz. that the general good and the interests of the individual are always coincident. For, the good is neither pleasure nor any finite and particular object, such, for instance, as honour, wealth, &c. which pleases the individual temporarily and accidentally. "It is that which is esteemed by all men without exception, that which all men agree in proclaiming fair and good, and which is so in fact universally and at all times,—as are temperance and justice." The good thus conceived is supremely useful and the ultimate source of all real and

permanent happiness. Hence, "the man that is guided by his own interest must always choose the Good or virtue, whoever first committed the error and crime of separating the Good from the useful is consigned by Socrates to the infernal gods." (Janet and Seailles, Problems of Philosophy, vo. II, pp. 8—9). The second part of the definition, *vice is ignorance*, follows necessarily from the first. If virtue consists in the knowledge of the good, vice must consist in the ignorance of it, because, for the reasons stated above, no man can do the bad *voluntarily* or *knowingly*, i. e. without going against his own interests and happiness.

**Criticism :—**The defect of the definition is twofold : (i) In the first place, it is difficult to understand how a man can be held accountable for his vicious actions, if they are due to ignorance, for morally imputable actions must be voluntary, i. e. involve a knowledge of the end.

(ii) In the second place, it is contrary to facts. It is a well-known truth that one may know the good, yet may do the bad. Knowledge and actions are not always congruent. The reasons for such incongruence seem to be these ; man is ordinarily guided in his actions by two kinds of idea of the good. Under any given circumstances his idea of the good is never a mere matter of pure knowledge. This idea is considerably coloured and shaped by the presence of other forces such as his desires, interests, prejudices, passions, &c. But those influences are, to a very large extent, determined by his character or the habits which he has acquired in the

past. Again, when he sits down in a "cool hour" to reflect upon the true nature of the good, the circumstances and conditions change. He now views the matter from a different standpoint—from a universal standpoint—not from a particular or limited standpoint. His point of view is no longer affected and shaped by his particular and variable desires and interests. The speculative or philosophic reflection is now his only guide. Therefore the idea of the good that he now forms is likewise universal and therefore true in so far as it goes. But this latter idea always remains the *ideal*; for when the time of action comes his character and habits assert themselves and alter the whole point of view by his supplied philosophic reflection. The consequence is though he knows the good, he may do the bad. So that in a concrete situation, a man is never led by pure knowledge; the concrete nature of the man as it is at the time of action—his whole knowledge, feeling and volition at the time—determines his actions. Hence the main error of the Socratic definition is due to the confusion of the abstract with the concrete—the pure knowledge with the total self of man.

But there is another difficulty in the definition which remains to be explained. A corollary of it, as we have found, is that *no man does the bad voluntarily or knowingly*. No doubt there is some truth in the assertion. As Dr. D'Arcy remarks: "The end is always conceived as good at the moment of choice. No man chooses evil regarding it as evil. He chooses it as his good. The very essence of badness is a character or will which is

so set that it finds its good in that which in moments of calm reflection the mind recognises as evil. There is a want of correspondence between the character and the abstract knowledge which the mind possesses. The Socratic error consists in assuming that the correspondence must be complete, making mere knowing to be the essence of self-hood". ( *Ethics*, p. 171, *foot-note* ).

**Conclusion** :—We therefore conclude thus : virtue does not belong to man as merely a *knowing* subject, but belongs to his *total self* ; the total self as exhibited in a particular conduct is the character or the organisation of habits which he has formed in the past *plus* the present determination of his will. But the actual determination of the conduct depends largely upon the character, so that the nature of conduct depends largely upon the nature of the character. Hence his fitness to act rightly, i. e. his virtue likewise depends upon the nature of the character or the habits ; that is to say, if his character or habits are good, his actions are virtuous ; if they are bad, his actions are bad. Thus virtue and vice are good and bad habits of will or qualities of character.

**III. Virtue and Imperfect Duty** :— We should consider here another definition of virtue. We have found in the last chapter that by some the duties are distinguished into perfect and imperfect. The perfect duties, i. e. those obligations which can be definitely codified, are sometimes called Duties ; while the imperfect duties, i. e. those obligations which are comparatively vague or cannot be definitely formulated are



called virtues, implying by the latter assertion that virtue is something more than duty, that a virtuous man is one who does more than his duty, more than what can reasonably be required of him. In this sense virtue is used in common language. This also seems to be its original meaning. The term virtue is derived from Latin *vir* = a man or hero, and thus means *manliness* or *valour*. Most probably it was applied at first to the most eminent and praiseworthy qualities, i. e. qualities to acquire which a man would have required manliness or valour. Prof. Muirhead remarks : "the word is often loosely used in the sense of meritorious act, as when we speak of 'making virtue of necessity'. Here it is distinguished from duty, as the meritorious act is distinguished from the act which is simply good : the meritorious act being that which is the result of a higher than the average standard of virtue, whether in overcoming natural disadvantages as when we speak of the diligence of a stupid scholar as meritorious, or in achieving exceptional success *caeteris paribus*". ( *Ethics*, p. 190, *foot-note* ). "The distinctive mark of virtue," observes Prof. Alexander, "seems to lie in what is beyond duty : yet every such act must depend on the peculiar circumstances under which it is done, of which we leave the agent to be the judge, and we certainly think his duty to do what is best." ( *Moral Order and Progress*, p. 243 ).

**Criticism** :—The main defects of the definition are these : It identifies virtue with a particular class of duties, and draws a hard and fast line of distinction between it and the other class. But we have found in the

last chapter ( § viii ) that there is no real distinction between the so-called perfect and imperfect duties. So that it is perfectly arbitrary to hold the latter as identical with virtues, and the former as absolutely distinct from them. There is another inconsequence of such an arbitrary distinction. If the perfect duties and virtues are entirely distinct, the virtue of truthfulness, sincerity, &c. arising out of the perfect duty of not lying, and the virtues arising out of the perfect duties of not killing, not stealing. &c. cannot be said to be virtue at all, according to this theory. This is undoubtedly against the common verdict of mankind. The third and the most serious defect is that it identifies virtue with duty. A duty is a sporadic and isolated choice, while a virtue is a habit of choice. If I speak truth in a single instance I may be said to have done my duty ; but I may be said to be truthful only when I have acquired the habit of truth-speaking, i. e. only when I always or nearly always speak the truth. Thus there is an essential distinction between duty and virtue, even although the latter arises out of the former. Take an instance of the imperfect duty. To give alms to the poor is an imperfect duty ; and if I give away for the help of a famine-stricken people much more than what is reasonably demanded of me, I am said, according to this theory, to be virtuous. But, is it not my duty to give away much more than what is expected of me ? As Prof. Mackenzie has truly observed : "But surely we have a moral obligation to act in the best way possible." These theorists forget that if virtue consists

in doing more than what we are duty-bound to do, we do either what is *immoral*, or what is *non-moral*, for by exceeding duty we either violate it, or go beyond the province of duty. For these reasons the definition is full of inconsistencies, and should be rejected.

**IV. The Virtue and Virtues:—**We have found that there is one supreme duty which unconditionally commands us to realise the Ideal or Rational Self ; and that all other duties are merely fragmentary forms of or essential means to, it. By constant fulfilment of that supreme duty we may acquire a habit of always willing or acting in such a wise as to gradually realise it. This habit of will or activity is called the *supreme virtue*. All other virtues arise out of the constant discharge of the secondary or subordinate duties, and these virtues are mere fragmentary forms of the supreme virtue. But ultimately all virtues, like all rights and duties, are essential means to the supreme good of life. As Prof. Green truly remarks : "It is true that the principle and the end of all virtues is the same. They are all determined by relation to social well-being ( which is included in the supreme good ) as their final cause, and they all rest on a dominant interest in some form or other of that well-being." Therefore the virtues, being the means to the same 'end, constitute a single system. Plato holds the same view : "The virtues are not isolated, but one and whole". But this whole or organisation of the virtues is not perfect from the beginning : it grows and develops in course of time, but not in the same form and way in every individual.

Hence we are led to consider the relation of the virtues to society and to the social functions of the individual.

**V. Virtues relative to society :—**The relation of the virtues to society may be conceived in two ways. All virtues have social aspect. Though we have defined a virtue as a good habit of will or character it is not, for that reason, wholly individual. In the last chapter we have found that all duties are relative to society ; all duties arise out of our relationships and connections with the social institutions ; or all duties are means to our supreme well-being which includes the social well-being. The immediate basis of all virtues being duty, the virtues like duties are relative to society. Besides this general relation, there is a special relation. We have found in the first chapter of this Book that society is an organism—it changes and develops, and thus passes through a series of stages in the course of years and ages. The virtues that are relative to a particular stage, also change when the social organism passes to a higher stage ; and so on. Thus relatively to each stage we have a group of virtues having definite and unique character. This, of course, does not imply that at each stage the virtues change completely and assume a completely new character. Such an absolute change is inconsistent with the nature of evolution ; for every process of evolution involves both permanence and change ; some aspect of the preceding stage is retained and some aspect is changed. The evolution of the system of virtues may be described in the following way : “The meaning, or content, of virtues changes

from time to time. Their abstract form, the man's attitude towards the good, remains the same. But when institutions and customs change and natural abilities are differently stimulated and evoked, ends vary, and habits of character are differently esteemed both by the individual agent and by others who judge. No social group could be maintained without patriotism and chastity, but the actual meaning of chastity and patriotism is widely different in contemporary society from what it was in savage tribes or from what we may expect it to be five hundred years from now. Courage in one society may consist almost wholly in willingness to face physical danger and death in voluntary devotion to one's community ; in another, it may be willingness to support an unpopular cause in the face of ridicule." ( Profs. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 401 ). For these reasons, the whole system of virtues suitable for a particular generation at a particular time should be considered anew and separately. To know what are the most suitable virtues for us in modern times, we should study carefully the constitution and requirements of modern society ; or in other words we should carefully study "the moral habitudes of thought and action" in modern times.

**The Ethos of a people** :—These moral habitudes of thought and action ( German *Sitten* ) are called *Ethos of people*. "The ethos of a people", says Prof. Mackenzie, "constitutes the atmosphere in which the best members of a race habitually live ; or, in the language that we have previously employed, it constitutes the universe of

their moral activities. It is the morality of our world ; and on the whole the man who conforms to the morality of that world is a good man, and the man who violates it is a bad man. .... Now the virtues that are current among a people at a given time are the expression in particular forms of the ethos of that people and their significance can be appreciated only in relation to the general life of the times". ( Manual, pp. 337—39 ). Thus, the moral education of the individual should consist in gradually bringing him into harmony with the ethos of the people to which he belongs. As Hegel has truly observed ; "The child, in his character of the form of the possibility of a moral individual, is something subjective or negative ; his growing to manhood is the ceasing to be of this form, and his education is the discipline or the compulsion thereof. The positive side and the essence is that he is *suckled at the breast of the universal Ethos*". Again, "The wisest men of antiquity have given judgment that wisdom and virtue consist in living agreeably to the Ethos of one's people." Therefore the ethos of a people is the only concrete moral standard or the concrete embodiment of the moral ideal of the people at the time, in accordance with which each member of the people should shape his character, and to which he should appeal at the time of a moral conflict. But the ethos is not always, at least in its entirety, definitely formulated. A part of it is stated in express and definite rules and precepts, and another part remains more or less indefinite and unformulated. Again, the ethos of a people should not be considered as completely stationary.

It should be remembered that ethos is nothing but the moral atmosphere that prevails at a particular stage of society. It continues to be stationary so long as the stage of society remains so ; and when society passes, in the course of its evolution, to a higher stage, it also changes. Or in other words, the ethos of a people evolves like society or character. Prof. Bradley seemed to have forgot this fact, when he emphatically said in his *Ethical Studies* ( p. 180 ) that “the man who seeks to have a higher morality than that of his world is on the threshold of immorality”. This is evidently mistaken. Of course the morality of a man’s world is his direct and immediate standard ; but this does not imply that he should not have a higher standard. In fact the ethos of a people is only a partial and incomplete reproduction of the *Universal Ethos* under the peculiar conditions and circumstances of the people ; and the moral progress is impossible unless and until its best members try to rise to a higher standard of life.

**VI. Virtues relative to the stations of individuals :**—The virtues are not only relative to different societies in different ages and to the different stages of the same society, but also to the different positions and functions of individuals in society. We have seen in the last chapter that there are some duties that arise out of our special social positions and functions attached to those positions. They are specific concrete duties. The virtues that are born of these kinds of duties are likewise specific and concrete. Thus, the virtues of a man and of a woman are, to a certain extent, different ;

so are the virtues of a ruler and of a subject, of a husband and of a wife, of a father and of a mother, of a teacher and of a student, of a lawyer and of a judge, of a healthy man and of a sick man, of a trader and of a scientist ; and so in other cases. Therefore if we want to determine all the virtues that are admirable and desirable in a particular man we must minutely take into consideration his position and function in society, and the qualities that he must have in order to occupy that position and to fulfil those functions worthily and admirably.

The virtues are relative to the individual in another way. Every man is born with some special natural abilities or gifts of nature. These natural abilities should be carefully distinguished from virtues proper ; for the former are original impulses, while the latter are acquired habits. But, yet, when these gifts of nature are utilized for the purpose of promoting the social well-being, they become virtue ; and when they are not so utilized they turn, "if not to vice, at least to delinquency." Such natural abilities differ widely in different persons, whose different circumstances influencing and directing them differently "occasion and exact different virtues". Thus, though the virtues of different men take different forms, yet, each person is as virtuous as the other.

**VII. Virtue as the mean between two extremes** :—According to Aristotle. "the proper excellence or virtue of man will be the habit or trained faculty that makes a man good, and makes him perform



his function well." After defining virtue in this way he proceeds to inquire more minutely into the nature of virtue. It is generally found that the excellence of a thing, whatever that thing may be, consists in the mean between two extremes—excess and defect. "Every art or science perfects its work in this way, looking to the mean and bringing its work up to this standard ( so that people are wont to say of a good work that nothing could be taken from it or added to it, implying that excellence is destroyed by excess or deficiency, but secured by observing the mean ; and good artists, as we say, do in fact keep their eyes fixed on this in all that they do ), and if virtue, like nature, is more exact and better than any art, it follows that virtue also must aim at the mean—virtue of course meaning moral virtue or excellence ; for it has to do with passions and actions, and it is these that admit of excess and deficiency and the mean." For example, "with respect to honour and disgrace, there is a moderation which is high-mindedness, an excess which may be called vanity, and a deficiency which is little-mindedness." "In the matter of giving and taking money, moderation is liberality, excess and deficiency are prodigality and illiberality." But this moderation or mean is not *absolute* ; it is relative to the abilities and circumstances of each person and thus, "is not one and the same for all." "Virtue, then, is a habit or trained faculty of choice, the character of which lies in moderation or observance of the mean relative to the abilities and circumstances of each person and thus. "is not one and the same for all." "Virtue

then, is a habit or trained faculty of choice, the character of which lies in moderation or observance of the mean relatively to the persons concerned, as determined by reason, i. e. by the reason by which the prudent man would determine it. And it is a moderation, firstly, inasmuch as it comes in the middle or mean between two vices, one on the side of excess, the other on the side of defect ; and, secondly, inasmuch as, while these vices fall short of or exceed the due measure in feeling and in action, it finds and chooses the mean, middling, or moderate amount. Regarded in its essence, therefore, or according to the definition of its nature, virtue is a moderation or middle state, but viewed in its relation to what is best and right it is the extreme of perfection." But it is always a very hard thing to hit the mean. "Thus any one can be angry—that is quite easy ; any one can give money away or spend it : but to do these things to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with the right object, and in the right manner is not what every body can do, and is by no means easy ; and that is the reason why right doing is rare and praiseworthy and noble." "Such matters lie within the region of particulars, and can only be determined by perception." ( *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk, II, chaps vi—ix ).

### **VIII. The classification of virtues :—**

(1) **The principle of the classification :—**We have seen above that the virtues are closely related to the capacities, endowments, social positions and functions of individuals, and also to the customs and institu-

tions of society ; and change along with the change of the latter. These facts alone are sufficient to make any logical classification undesirable and impossible. On the one hand, the virtues, like the rights and duties, are numberless ; on the other, "every situation, not of a routine order, brings in some special shading, some unique adaptation of disposition." Again, we have seen also that the virtues constitute a single system or organisation, so that they are interrelated with one another. For this reason also a classification, which requires an exact definition of each, and a hard and fast distinction between each and the others, becomes impossible and misleading, yet a some sort of classification, at least of the most important virtues, is necessary for their description and the better understanding of their mutual relations. An attempt at such a classification will take two forms : *Subjectively* considered, the virtues are habits of will or qualities of character ; and *objectively* considered, they are connected with the social customs and institutions. Consequently the virtues may be classified in two ways : either by reference to the capacities and endowments of individuals, or by reference to the social customs and institutions. Some, as Prof. Alexander, maintain that "the latter is the true classification, inasmuch as moral institutions provide us with a ready-made map of the different parts of the moral life. They are 'the mode in which morality gives effect to the various wants of mankind'". But Prof. Muirhead, on the other hand, observes that "there is corresponding to the system of

objective institutions a subjective system of impulses and desires, and that the virtues are aptitudes for restraining and co-ordinating natural instincts, and so giving effect to the self as an organic whole, are just as natural a basis of classification as are the institutions which are maintained by means of them.....As a matter of fact, a complete system of ethics would require to exhibit the forms of good ( i. e. the virtues ) under both aspects, as related on the one side to the system of instincts and desires known as human nature, and on the other to the objective moral order as that is embodied in social institutions. In the one case we should be supplementing our exposition of the principles of ethics by a more or less elaborate psychological account of the springs of action. In the other case we should be adding to the science of ethics in the stricter sense a sociological account of the principal forms which man in his efforts after a fuller expression of his true nature, has devised to be the repositories of his moral acquisitions." ( Ethics, pp. 188—89 ). Prof. Dewey maintains a similar view : "we may, however, classify the chief institutions of social life—language, scientific investigation, artistic production, industrial efficiency, family, local community, nation, humanity,—and specify the types of mental disposition and interest which are fitted to maintain them flourishingly ; or starting from typical impulsive and instinctive tendencies, we may consider the form they assume when they become intelligently exercised habits. A virtue may be defined, accordingly, either as the *settled intelligent identification*

*of an agent's capacity with some aspect of the reasonable or common happiness ; or, as a social custom or tendency organised into a personal habit of valuation.* From the latter standpoint, truthfulness is the social institution of language maintained at its best pitch of efficiency through the habitual purposes of individuals ; from the former, it is an instinctive capacity and tendency to communicate emotions and ideas directed so as to maintain social peace and prosperity. In like fashion one might catalogue all forms of social custom and institution on one hand ; and all the species and varieties of individual equipment on the other, and enumerate a virtue for each. But the performance is as formal as not to amount to much.' ( Ethics, p. 403 ).

From the above it is evident that any attempt at the exhaustive classification of the virtues must be futile. This is true not only of the classification of the virtues but also of the rights and duties. We have already given a fair list of the latter ; and the principle we have followed in that connection will be followed also here. The reasons for such a procedure are obvious. We have shown that the terms right, duty, and virtue are correlative ; so that the principle of their classification must be the same. As Prof. Green truly holds : "The virtues are dispositions to exercise positively, in some way contributory to social good, those powers which, because admitting of being so exercised, society should secure to him ; the powers which a man has a right to possess, which constitute his rights. It is therefore convenient to arrange the virtues according to the division

of rights." ( Works, vol. II, pp. 550—51 ). Prof. Paulsen adopts the same principle in classifying both duties and virtues. He says : "Corresponding to the classification of duties, we may also divide the virtues into two groups ; we may call them *individualistic* and *social virtues*." ( Ethics, p. 482 ). Prof. Mackenzie also suggests that the virtues, like the duties, may be divided into *self-regarding* and *altruistic*. We shall adopt also a similar kind of classification, and distinguish the virtues, first into two broad classes, viz. the *individual* or *self-regarding* virtues, and the *altruistic* or *other-regarding* virtues, the latter including the virtues that correspond to the duties to plants and lower animals, and also to God ; we shall also subdivide these two broad classes in the way we have done in the case of the duties.

(2) **The classes of Virtues :—**(A) **The Individual or Self-regarding Virtues :—**(a) **The Physical Virtues :—**The constant fulfilment of the physical duties gives rise to some virtues which may be designated as the physical virtues. (i) Corresponding to the duty to respect one's own life and the life of others there are virtues that consist in the *habitual regard for self-preservation and physical culture* on the part of each individual, and in his habitual regard for the preservation and promotion of the life of others. As Prof. Paulsen has observed : "The function of the body is to serve as the *organ* and *symbol* of the soul." So that the virtues that we should cultivate will not consist merely in the constant preservation and increase of the *health* and *strength* of the body, and the avoidance of

doing what impairs and weakens it ; but also in educating it in such a way as 'it may appear in this visible world as a pleasing expression of the invisible beauty of the soul,' inasmuch as "*beauty and grace* are the visible corporeal manifestations of a good and beautiful soul."

The virtue or the habit of self-preservation includes, pre-eminently, the *habit of good nutrition*. By taking the unwholesome food and drink we may impair and weaken our health and strength more than by any other means. So that we should cultivate the habit of taking the proper food and drink in the proper way at the proper time. Hence *Temperance* which consists in regulating the appetites is one of the fundamental virtues. Temperance in its wider sense is included in *Self-control* with which we shall deal in the sequel.

Good *habitation and clothing* also are required for the preservation and health of the body. So that our duties with regard to them give birth to some virtues which consist in the habits of living in a clean and well-ventilated house, and of covering the body with suitable clothes, not for fashion, but for health.

Another important virtue is the habit of *developing and exercising the bodily powers*. Life is activity ; and therefore without activity the body deteriorates. *Play* and *work* are two important forms of activity by which the health and strength of the body may be sustained and increased, and the bodily powers may be developed. *Gymnastic exercises* are scientific plays ; and therefore should be resorted to by all men and women in some form or other. *Athletic sports* such as races, boating,

mountain-climbing, bicycling, &c. are another important forms of play. The physical powers may be developed also by many useful works. But work is less free than play.

*Rest* and *Recreation* are not less necessary than action. Over-activity or prolonged activity impairs the health and retards the development of the bodily powers. Activity involves the loss of energy ; hence it is necessary that the loss should be restored. The real object of rest and recreation is restoration of the loss. Consequently, "a proper balance between work and recreation is an essential condition of health, efficiency, and happiness. An excess on either side is equally dangerous." So that we should cultivate a habit of taking proper and necessary rest and recreation after play and work.

(ii) Corresponding to the duties to respect other's property and to make proper use of one's own, there are some important virtues. The virtue that is concerned with other's property has no special name. The main virtues concerned with one's own property are *industry*, *frugality* or *economy*, *liberality*, *magnificence* and *high-mindedness*.

(a) *Industry* is the virtue that corresponds to the duty to earn property for the maintenance of life. In the civilized societies labour by which property is earned assumes the form of a calling or profession ; and the virtues concerned therewith are *professional efficiency* and *fidelity to calling*.

(B) *Frugality* is the virtue that is concerned with



the *use* or *consumption* of property. It is "the capacity to manage one's affairs according to one's income as well as according to the needs and obligations which grow out of individual conditions and social rank." This virtue takes on different forms and gets different names under different conditions. (i) It is called *liberality* when the property is given "with a view to, or for the sake of that which is noble, and given rightly," i. e. when the right things are given to the right persons at the right times. Aristotle uses liberality, also in connection with the taking of wealth. He says : "Liberality, being moderation in the giving and taking of wealth, the liberal man will give and spend the proper amount on the proper objects, alike in small things and in great, and that with pleasure ; and will also take the proper amount from the proper sources." (ii) *Magnificence* is the virtue that is concerned with the large expenditure of wealth, and in this respect goes beyond liberality in largeness. "But the largeness is *relative* ; the expenditure that is suitable for a man who is fitting out a war-ship is not the same as that which is suitable for the chief of a sacred embassy. What is suitable, then, is relative to the person, and the occasion, and the business on hand. Yet he who spends what is fitting on trifling or moderately important occasions is not called magnificent ; but he who spends what is fitting on great occasions. For the magnificent man is liberal, but a man may be liberal without being magnificent." (Nicomachean Ethics, pp. 103, 108 ). (iii) The virtue of *high-mindedness* consists in the habit of claiming much and deserving much.

The virtue that consists in the habit of claiming little and deserving little is *temperateness* or *modesty*.

(b) **The Mental Virtues** :—The two typical forms of the mental virtues are (1) *Self-control*, (2) *Self-culture*.

(1) **Self-control** :—As briefly defined Self-control is the control of the lower self by the higher, of the blind impulses by the rational will, of the actual by the ideal. It is "the capacity to govern life by purposes and ideals." (Paulsen). It is the chief condition of all moral culture, all moral development. For if the blind impulses or feelings are not controlled and organised into a system in accordance with the moral ideal, the moral life deteriorates instead of progressing toward the goal which is nothing but the perfection of the rational will. Self-control assumes different forms that correspond to the different forms of impulsive life. Of these four are important, viz. *Temperance*, *Courage*, *Calmness* and *Self-respect*.

(i) **Temperance or Moderation** :—Temperance is the habit of resisting temptation to sensuous pleasure. The satisfaction of the impulses gives us pleasure that is most attractive or alluring, and at the same time direct and immediate. So that we are apt, in most instances, to be guided by it in our conduct rather than by the rational will. It is therefore necessary that we should always try to resist the temptation to such pleasure whenever it inclines us to act in opposition to the rational will. This does not imply that we should eradicate the impulses. That is not only impossible

but also a folly ; for these impulses are the original forces of our nature and lie at the root of all true motives to action. Hence their annihilation will mean the annihilation of our own nature. What they require is that they should be controlled and satisfied in such a wise as will assist the development of higher life instead of disturbing it.

*Unpretendingness or Modesty* is a virtue which is a modification of temperance, or may be regarded as the inner form of it. "It is moderation of desire as such, the moderation of the desire for wealth and fame, position and pleasure. Unassuming modesty consists in habitually lowering one's pretensions to the level of one's fortunes. Its effect is contentment ; and hence it is the safest guide to happiness, just as its opposite, covetousness, or cupidity is the surest means to unhappiness." ( Prof. Paulsen, *Ethics*, p. 491 ).

(ii) **Courage** is the habit of resisting the "painful, dangerous, and terrible impressions by means of a rational will." Temperance is the habit of resisting the temptation to pleasure, while courage is the habit of resisting pain and danger. As temperance is the mean between *insensitiveness* to sensuous pleasure and *licentiousness*, so courage is the mean between *cowardice* and *foolhardiness*. Two kinds of behaviour are possible for a man when attacked by something dangerous : he may be struck by fear and take to flight ; or he may be impelled by rage to defend himself and thus run into danger. The former attitude is cowardice and the latter blind rage or foolhardiness. Courage or bravery take

to a middle course. The brave man does not run away from danger, nor rushes into it ; he calmly and carefully studies the situation, deliberates and decides what course of action is to be taken, and then proceeds to carry out his resolution with firmness and energy. With him "discretion is the better part of valour."

*Martial Courage* is the first form in which this virtue was usually recognised in ancient times. But with the progress of civilization other forms of it have come to be recognised as even surpassing the first in importance. Of these the chief is what may be called the *civil courage*,—"independence of thought and action, characterful self-assertion against the great pressure exerted by superior and inferior forces." One of the baneful effects of civilization is to make the individual more and more dependent upon others. But dependence tends to pervert the will and thus hinders the real progress of moral life. "So the moral duty arises to develop the inner power of resistance which calmly and firmly opposes every attempt to subject the individual to established customs and authority, which serves and remains loyal to truth and justice, regardless of whether such conduct brings favour and popularity or disfavour and contempt. To remain true to oneself, that is the aim of such ideal courage. No one can have it, the centre of whose life does not lie within himself ; whoever makes external things his ultimate goal cannot attain to inner freedom. Spinoza was, in his life and teaching, a great preacher of this doctrine of freedom." ( *Ibid*, p. 498 ).

Another important form of courage is *Perseverance* or *Persistence*. This virtue consists in habitually accepting and enduring all sorts of hardship and exertions that are needful for the realisation of one's ends. It is the virtue of the industrial age, as martial courage was the virtue of the heroic age. Perseverance is the characteristic virtue of a civilized man, and distinguishes him from the savage ; for the savage is particularly distinguished for the capability of making great momentary exertions, but lacks in the capability of making continued effort ; but, generally, the reverse is the case with the civilized men.

The *Love of Order* is a particular phase of perseverance. It is the habit of acting "with business-like regularity" and is, therefore, an important quality which gives us freedom and peace of mind.

**Patience** is another important virtue allied to perseverance. It is the habit of bearing pain and trouble without being overcome by them. We may distinguish two forms of it : *passive patience* and *active patience*. The former is the power of bearing pain and suffering *passively*, i. e. without complaint and opposition ; the latter is the "ability to survive defeats, disappointments, and losses, and to begin life anew." This virtue is more characteristic of women than of men. For this reason Prof. Paulsen has called it "feminine courage". Patience is a great virtue, for it is invariably the mark of a noble character. The selfish are scarcely patient, although they may be brave and persistent.

(iii) The third form of Self-control is *Calmness*.

This is the ability to control and check the undue outburst of those emotions which are excited by any disturbance in our relations with others : e. g. anger, vexation, ill-humour. It is needless to say that many of our unpleasant experiences are due to the lack of this virtue.

(iv) **Self-respect** is the precondition of Self-control. Self-control presupposes that there must be a self *to be* controlled and there must be a self *to* control. And Self-control is necessary, because our vocation as men requires that we should develop and perfect the latter self which is our true self. But if we have no respect for the true self, if we do not regard it as the most valuable and worthy of being developed and perfected, no control of the lower impulses is possible. The basis of self-respect is, therefore, the consciousness that we are *persons* ; that we have a self to develop and perfect ; and that this self is more valuable, and more worthy of being developed and perfected than anything else in the world. Self-respect is, therefore, also the precondition of self-culture, for we like to culture a self when we have a respect for it, when we consider it as worth the culture. In fact self-respect is closely allied to the supreme virtue, and is, therefore, the precondition of all virtues.

The fruit of Self-control is *Inner peace and Cheerfulness of mind*, or in one word *Contentment*. For in a life characterized by perfect self-control all the jarring elements have been perfectly harmonised, the result of which is that there is no conflict, no discord, but all peace and contentment.

(2) **Self-culture** :—Self-culture is no less important than Self-control. The object of Self-control is to check the preponderance and role of the lower impulses and is therefore *negative*. The object of Self-culture is to develop and perfect human nature by increasing its higher powers and capacities, and is therefore *positive*. Self-control is, in effect, preparatory to self-culture. The latter term is very wide in its significance, including all the virtues. But here it is used in a restricted sense, including only the *Aesthetic* and *Intellectual virtues*. I here follow Professor Paulsen who holds : "Culture means for the individual the development of the intellect to the end that he may know the truth, and of the senses and the imagination, that he may comprehend and enjoy the beautiful".

(i) **The Aesthetic virtues** :—These include the *Cultured Taste* which is the capacity of enjoying and appreciating beauty and sublimity in nature and art. These are, particularly, the virtues of the *artists* and the *poets*. Aesthetic culture refines and ennobles our nature no less than the intellectual. The reasons are obvious : both emotion and intellect are two phases of the same self, so that the culture of emotion is as necessary for the development of the self as the culture of intellect.

(ii) **The Intellectual Virtues** :—These may be subdivided into two classes—(a) those which are concerned with *pursuit of Truth*, and (b) those concerned with *application* of it to life. The first include *Sincerity*, *Impartiality*, *Concentration*, *Accuracy*, &c. ; and the

second, *Prudence* ( in narrower sense ), and *Wisdom* ( in broader sense ).

(a) The true *Love of Truth* necessarily leads to the pursuit of truth ; and the true pursuit of truth requires that we should be *sincere* in the pursuit, *impartial* in studying and examining objects, *should concentrate* our whole mind upon such objects, and be as *accurate* as possible in arriving at results in order that they may correspond to reality. Our life and prosperity entirely depend upon our correct knowledge of the external realities. Without *sincerity, impartiality, concentration* and *accuracy* such knowledge is impossible.

(b) The virtues described above are necessary for the attainment of knowledge. But mere attainment of knowledge is not sufficient for the development of the self. For that purpose we should regulate our conduct in accordance with that knowledge, or we should apply the truths thus attained to the conduct of our life. The habit of regulating conduct by the application of knowledge, is *Prudence*. "Prudence", says Aristotle, "is a formed faculty which apprehends truth by reasoning or calculation, and issues in action in the field of human good." ( *Ethics*, p. 188 ). But the term *prudence* may be used in two senses—in a narrower and a wider sense. Prudence as understood in modern times has the former meaning, while in the latter sense it is called *Wisdom*. Thus Prudence and Wisdom are two forms of the same virtue. Prudence, in the narrower sense, is the ability to organise the impulses and desires with a view to secure the greatest sum total of selfish advantage and



pleasure ; it is therefore concerned with the calculation of the immediate consequences of actions. Consequently it is a virtue only in those instances where the selfish advantage and pleasure are not inconsistent with the advantage and pleasure of others. In other instances it is a *vice*. ( For a complete account of Prudence in the narrower sense, see Bk. I, pp. 150—51, 156—58 ).

Prudence in the wider sense or Wisdom takes into consideration both the immediate and remote, selfish and altruistic consequences of actions, and selects the right means to the end thus formed. Thus the differences between Prudence and Wisdom are twofold : Prudence forms an end of action by calculating its immediate consequences and by the bearing of the latter upon the private advantage and happiness of the agent ; the end thus formed may, in some instances, be wrong : while Wisdom forms an end of action by calculating both its immediate and remote consequences and by the bearing of the latter upon the advantage and happiness of all beings, the agent as well as others ; the end thus formed is, therefore, the right end in all instances. Prudence is thus a narrow or partial virtue, while wisdom is a *wide* or *complete* virtue. Wisdom may, also, be called the supreme virtue, because all other virtues presuppose it. As Prof. Mackenzie has remarked : “a man may be courageous and temperate in the conduct of his life, and yet be living foolishly. A wise choice of the line to be pursued is a necessary preliminary.” In this sense it may be designated *Practical Wisdom*, whose function is always to form, under given

circumstances, a *universal end*, i.e. an end which has reference to the common Good, and to select right means to realise that end. Wisdom, we have said, is a wide virtue ; and if we examine its nature closely we find that it includes many other virtues such as *Care*, *Foresight*, *Decisiveness of choice*, &c.

(B). **The Other-regarding Virtues** :—These include the *Social Virtues*, the *Religious Virtues*, and the virtues that arise out of the duties to plants and lower animals.

(a) **The Social Virtues** :—All the social virtues may be summed up under one comprehensive head, viz. *Justice* in its old sense or more appropriately *Benevolence* in its modern sense. Benevolence, when exercised in involuntary relations such as those with the family, neighbour, country, State, humanity, &c. gives rise to *Filial Piety*, *Conjugal Love*, *Public Spirit* or *Love of Neighbour*, *Patriotism*, *Habitual Regard for the King and the Constituted Authority*, *Philanthropy*, &c. ; and when exercised in voluntary relations such as those which arise from the transaction of business, social intercourse, membership of a church or party, whether of one's own or other peoples, includes *Honour in discharge of debts or other forms of contracts*, *Politeness* ("benevolence in small things"), *Gratitude*, *Loyalty*, and *Toleration*. Again, Benevolence, exercised in the communication of truth, includes *Truthfulness* or *Veracity*, *Candour*, *Proper Reserve*, *Consideration*, &c. Of this long list of virtues we shall give detailed description of only three, viz. Justice, Love of Neighbour, and Veracity.

**Benevolence** :—Benevolence is the virtue under which, as we have said, all other virtues may be summed up. Benevolence is, therefore, *the* social virtue, all other social virtues being merely its forms. This is particularly the view of Dr. Paulsen and Prof. Muirhead : “the general fundamental form of the social virtues,” says Dr. Paulsen, “may be called *benevolence* and defined as that habit of the will and mode of conduct which tends to promote the welfare of the surroundings by hindering disturbances and producing favourable conditions of life.” (Ethics p. 596). For Prof. Muirhead’s view see p. 201 of his Ethics. Prof. James Seth seems to entertain a different view : according to him Benevolence is not *the whole* of the social virtue, but only *a part* of it—only its *positive* aspect. “Social virtue, on its negative side,” says he, “we may call justice, with its corresponding duty of freedom or equality ; on its positive side, we may call the virtue benevolence, and the duty fraternity or brotherliness.” (Ethics, p. 273). The latter view seems to be arbitrary, for if we examine the nature of the social virtues we find that all of them have a general tendency towards the welfare of others, and this general tendency, in its impulsive and irrational form, is called *Sympathy*, and in its rational form, called Benevolence. So that *Benevolence* is the general name for all social virtues, as *Self-love* is the general name for all self-regarding virtues.

The original basis of the social virtues is the sympathetic feelings and impulses. But these feelings and impulses are blind and therefore cannot form the basis

of rational and intended actions : they lead to involuntary activities which, although produce results beneficial to others, are not preconceived by the agent. Hence these blind primitive feelings and impulses should be rationalised, educated and illumined before they can lead to voluntary altruistic actions : or in other words, they should be converted into *rational desires* before they can form the motives of voluntary actions. Moreover, in human life, the blind impulses can never be trusted as the safe and adequate guides of actions : man is not a mere animal that he may always depend upon their blind guidance ; his life is so complex and composed of so inconsistent elements, and the situations he is often put into are so complicated and contradictory that these blind impulses should be placed under the regulative control of reason. *Benevolence is the general name for these habits which arise when we are constantly guided in our actions by the rationalised sympathetic feelings and impulses, or the rational altruistic desires.*

We may therefore conclude in the words of Dr. Paulsen : " Compassion is the natural basis of the social virtue of active Benevolence, but it is by no means a virtue itself, nor even, as Schopenhauer asserts, the absolute standard of the moral worth of a man. Like every phase of impulsive life, it must be educated and disciplined by reason; in the rational will it is both realized and limited,—realized in so far as it attains to its end, the furtherance of human welfare, limited in so far as it is prevented from doing harm. And hence we may accept what Spinoza, agreeing with the Stoics, says, that the wise man will strive to rid himself of compassion, and,

as far as human nature permits, to do well and to rejoice." (Ethics, p. 598).

The virtue of Benevolence has two aspects or phases—the one phase is *negative* and the other *positive*: the former consists in not retarding and the latter in promoting, the welfare of others. When we regard these two phases as two special virtues, we have the virtues of *Justice* and *Love of Neighbour*.

(i) **Justice**:—In ethical literature the term "Justice" is used in three senses:—(1) In its widest significance it is used in the sense of righteousness, uprightness, rectitude; all morality is summed under it; it is not therefore a *particular* virtue, but is *virtue in general*; every act of Justice is a *right* act; Justice is the fulfilment of duty or obligation. (2) From this follows the second meaning: Justice is also used in the sense of fairness, equity, impartiality, honesty in our dealings with our fellowmen. (3) In its narrowest sense it is used as the "*vindication* of right through the administration of law." But these three meanings are not really absolutely distinct. They are rather three forms of the real meaning of Justice. In a sense Justice sums up all virtue. Every particular virtue is, as we have found, only an essential means to the realisation of the supreme end or the ultimate good of human life, which includes both the individual and the social good. Thus, the supreme good of life being the harmonisation of these two apparently antagonistic goods, the just man must be the man who takes into consideration exclusively neither the good of the individual nor that of society but both together in their harmonisation.

Justice is therefore the pre-eminently social virtue ; it is "that which maintains the due order of individuals in the interest of the comprehensive or social unity." In its second sense also justice takes over the question of the whole in the distribution and apportionment of goods among its parts. A fair, impartial, honest man is he who does not overlook the interests of others (i.e. of the whole) for the sake of the interests of any particular individual. Here, too, therefore, Justice shows itself as the pre-eminently social virtue. Even in its narrowest sense Justice does not overlook the recognition of the whole. The rights should be vindicated because they are the essential means to the attainment of the common good. Thus the vindication of right means the vindication of the claim of the whole to have the infringement of the means to the attainment of its good, i.e. the rights, properly and adequately remedied. Thus we find that the three meanings in which Justice is used are not really distinct but three forms of the same meaning.

This is the sum and substance of the view which Prof. Dewey and others entertain. Here Justice is evidently identified with the social virtue. But there is another view which is maintained, as we have said before, by Dr Paulsen and others who identify the social virtue with Benevolence, regarding Justice as only the negative aspect of it. This is perhaps the prevalent view, and I have adopted it in my treatment of Justice.

*Justice, then, may be defined as a moral habit, as that disposition of the will and action, which abstains from interfering with the well-being of others, and as far as*

*possible, also prevents others from such interference.* This virtue arises from our regard for our fellows as ends-in-themselves and as our coequals, i.e. as *persons*. Justice especially vindicates itself by the vindication of right, for a right being an essential means to the supreme end of life, every just man should respect it and protect it from being violated. In this function Justice is called *legal* Justice and expresses itself in more or less codified laws which defend the different spheres of rights, each of which is protected by a prohibition. For this reason laws are usually described in negative forms: for instance, "Thou shalt not kill, commit adultery, steal, bear false witness against the honour of thy neighbour, and interfere with his liberty." The violation of the right is, therefore, called *Injustice*. Injustice denies the fact that our fellows are ends-in-themselves and are our coequals. The duty of Justice may, therefore, be stated in this general form in the words of Dr. Paulsen: "Do no wrong yourself, and permit no wrong to be done, so far as lies in your power; or expressed positively: Respect and protect the right." The virtue of Justice is the habitual discharge of such duty.

Aristotle's account of Justice should be taken into consideration in this connection. He also regards Justice as a negative virtue. He, first of all, distinguishes two kinds of Justice, *objective* and *subjective*: the former consists in acting or treating other persons *justly*; while the latter, in *habitually* desiring to do the objective Justice. The essence of objective Justice, he maintains, is "the correct proportional treatment of persons

according to their merits." He distinguishes three kinds of this Justice: (1) *Distributive* Justice, which consists in distributing something in which two or more persons have shares, in strict accordance with their merits. (2) *Corrective* Justice, which consists in trying to redress an unjust distribution of something among two or more persons by deducting something from one's share and adding it to other's. (3) *Reciprocal* Justice, which is particularly exercised in commercial relations, and consists in distributing and exchanging wealth, not according to the merits of the persons concerned but according to the rule of equality. The objective Justice as "the correct proportional treatment of two or more persons according to their merits" implies, therefore, three things: (i) a judge whose function is to treat two or more persons in strict accordance with their deserts or merits. (ii) Disposal of something they care for. (iii) There should be at least two persons whose deserts or merits are to be considered. Thus Justice demands *at least* three persons: at least two persons who are to be treated justly and a third who is to treat them justly. As a person, as an end-in-himself, every man has a right to such kind of treatment; it is the least which he can claim. Hence the duty of Justice consists in taking care that the rights of persons are not violated; and thus has only a *negative* function. But we should carefully distinguish the *legal* Justice and the *moral* Justice. The legal Justice is concerned with those relations and duties of persons which are fixed and recognised by law; it treats persons in correct proportion according as they act or not in obedience to



such fixed and recognised duties. The moral Justice is the correct proportional treatment of persons according as they act or not in obedience to the moral laws whether enforced at law or not.

From the above it is plain that the objective Justice is a duty, a sporadic act of a particular nature. The subjective Justice, on the other hand, is a virtue, a quality of character; it is a habit of desire to treat persons justly, to treat them in strict accordance with their deserts or merits; it is a fixed and enduring will "to give Cæsar what is Cæsar's."

We have found above that the duty of Justice has two parts, the first part being *abstinence from doing wrong*. The virtue arising out of this part of the duty is called *rectitude* or *probity* which is often regarded as the whole of Justice. This virtue implies that a just man should limit his acts to such an extent that he may not interfere with the interests of others; and that he is an unjust man who fails to do so, or intentionally does the contrary. The other part of the duty of Justice is more active, consisting in "the *non-suffrance*, the *warding off of injustice*, first, of the injustice done to others, then also of that done to self." This phase of Justice is usually called *the sense of Justice*.

(ii) **Love of Neighbour** :—The positive side of Benevolence is *Love of neighbour*. It is that habit of the will and action which always strives to promote the welfare of others by removing their wants or supplying their needs; it is the virtue which inclines us to help another in the fulfilment of his moral task. This virtue is more active than the virtue of Justice. At least one of the phases

of Justice is to passively abstain from doing harm to others ; but the virtue of Love consists entirely in doing good to others ; its essence is activity which ministers to the well-being of others : the passive manifestations of sympathy do not constitute Benevolence ; for the latter leads us to act for alleviating the sufferings of others and for aiding them in promoting their well-being. This virtue is therefore regarded as the great moral commandment, and is even identified with the worship of God. "Work is Worship," "performance of deeds beneficial to all beings is the worship of God," (" तस्य प्रियकार्यसाधनञ्च तदुपासनमेव "). Such sayings as these evidently show that this virtue is regarded as the highest virtue.

But, though this virtue is very clear in its meaning, it is not so clear in its limit or scope. "To do good to others" often comes into conflict with "to do good to one's own self." The egoistic and altruistic virtues are apparently antagonistic. The question, How far should we go in promoting the well-being of others? is one which it is not always easy to answer. The commandment is certainly true, but it is also true that we should not sacrifice our own interests always and absolutely to the interests of others. Both the egoistic and the altruistic virtues have, as we shall see in the sequel, their due place in the scheme of our life. Hence this commandment must be somewhat restricted ; and in order to restrict it we should take the following points into consideration.

(1) *The social duty should be regulated by reference to the egoistic duty.* The first and prime duty for a per-

son is the duty to develop and exercise his own powers and capacities, and to morally elevate his own life. Moreover, a man knows his own good better than the good for others. If a man neglects his duties towards himself for the sake of his care for the welfare of others, and thereby cripples himself both morally and physically he becomes quite unfit for even discharging his duties to others properly : (See Bk. II, pp. 105-9, and also chap. vi, §3, and pp. 152-53). Hence egoism is not less necessary for moral progress than altruism. All the true benefactors of mankind developed their own life first, then they proceeded to serve others. Raphael and Goethe did great service to humanity simply by developing their inborn capacities. Of course this does not imply that egoism can develop, at least beyond some rudimentary stage, without the corresponding development of altruism. But it is certain that egoism should not be absolutely sacrificed to altruism.

(2) The altruistic duty should not be discharged in such a wise as to destroy the *independence* of others. If my act weakens their independence it is not only not beneficent but positively evil. "Self-reliance," says Dr. Paulsen, "is a general precondition of a healthy and normal life. The object of all help is, after all, to make help superfluous." Prof. James Seth observes : "Unwise kindness is not kindness,—that, for example, of the indulgent parent, teacher or friend, of blind philanthropy, of indiscriminate charity. The vice of such conduct is that it destroys the self-reliance and self-dependence of the individual so blindly 'loved.' The only true benevolence is that which helps another to help

himself ; which, by the very aid it gives, inspires in the recipient a new sense of his own responsibility, and rouses him to a better life." (Ethics, p. 277).

(3) Finally, the restriction of the universal duty of Love of neighbour is necessitated by our "*special duties towards special neighbours*." All persons have no equal claim to our sympathy and help. Those who are closely related to us—our children, parent, relatives, friends, servants, next-door neighbours &c.—have much better claim upon us than the persons who are remotely related to us or who are our neighbours in the sense that they live in the same country, or are members of the human Brotherhood. The duty toward the former is our *near* duty, whereas the duty toward the latter is our *remote* duty ; we are bound to do the near duties first, then the remote or supererogatory. Hence the degree of our neighbours' claim to our beneficence is determined by the proximity of their relations to us. Here also, as we know the needs of those who are near to us much better than the needs of the strangers, we are in a far better position to assist the former more effectually than the latter. In this way "the virtue of charity or love of neighbour is confined to fixed channel as it were, through which it flows as a permanent stream and fructifies its banks,"

We may now state the formula of the Love of neighbour in its final form : *always try your utmost to promote the well-being of others "in so far as this can be done without neglecting the problems of your own life, without violating the special duties which arise from your special relations to individuals and collective bodies and*

*finally without weakening the self-reliance of others."*  
(Dr. Paulsen).

**Relation between Justice and Love of neighbour :—**Although Justice and Love of neighbour are two phases of Benevolence, they are closely related to each other. The relation between them is the same as the relation between temperance and culture ; as the true culture implies temperance, so the true love of neighbour implies Justice. Justice is thus the basis of Love of neighbour. 'We cannot be generous to a man without first being just to him ; as we cannot attain a higher power without first exercising a lower, so we cannot do what is truly beneficent to a man without first doing what is just to him ; an unjust act of beneficence is no beneficence at all—an act of beneficence which is injurious to his true well-being, or retards the progress of his moral life, is positively evil, is unjust to him. The reasons are obvious : we have found above that Justice means abstinence from doing harm to others, and we really do harm to others when our beneficence is not based upon the true conception of his well-being. Hence promiscuous, unenlightened Love is harmful and consequently unjust. The true Love is thus the higher Justice, "justice made perfect." The philanthropy whether of the State or of the individual must therefore be based upon the true Justice. The most familiar instance of Love of neighbour is "*charity*" or "*almsgiving*," which has been "magnified as the grand social virtue." But in most cases it coexists with the utmost injustice to those who are its objects. Christianity has magnified this virtue to such an extent that it has "apparently accepted

the evil as permanent and inevitable, or has even welcomed it as the great opportunity of the moral life." The poverty of the poor has been regarded as the splendid field for the exercise of the virtue of Love of neighbour. And it fails to see that the poverty of the poor is, in the most instances, the result of injustice. The greater part of the sufferings and miseries of the people which give a few the opportunity for charity is really social inequities, arising out of causes which may be remedied. Justice requires the radical improvement of such cause. Charity removes only the external effects of those inequities, without remedying the root causes. Hence charity is not necessarily and always the expression of true beneficence. Promiscuous charity does harm more than good; it sometimes destroys the spirit of self-dependence, by begetting the spirit of other-dependence. Prof James Seth has, therefore, truly observed: "When all have justice, those who now need help will be independent of it, and men will learn at last that the best help one man can give to another is to help him to help himself. It is because we have really given our fellows less than justice that we have seemed to give them more." (Ethics, p. 275).

The closeness of the relation between Justice and Love will be more evident if we consider the real nature of Justice. What is Justice? It is "to recognise in our fellow man an *alter ego*, and to love our neighbour as ourselves. It is the principle of moral equality—that each shall count for one and no one for more than one" (Ibid); or in other words it is to regard

every man as a *person*, an end-in-himself. Justice is therefore, in its true form, another name for fraternity or brotherhood; Justice and Love are, thus, inseparable—they are two aspects of the same virtue.

Justice and Love being thus essentially identical, they operate in the same sphere—the sphere of society or of the State. But, yet, here too, they are not equally conspicuous. In the social or political sphere Justice is more prominent than Love whilst in the sphere of individual men Love is more prominent than Justice. As prof. James Seth has truly observed: “The State is the sphere of Justice, and in the eyes of the State all its citizens are alike—each counts for one, and no one for more than one.” The peculiar sphere of benevolence (i. e. love of neighbour) or the higher justice is that of private and domestic life, and of the non-political association of individuals.” (Ibid, p. 276). For this individual characteristic of the virtue of Love of neighbour the Greeks called it *Friendship*; and Aristotle thought that a man cannot have more than one *alter ego*. The modern conception of the virtue of Love is different; it singles out not an individual only, but whole “humanity.” But in both the cases the virtue means *brotherliness* or *fellowship*. From these considerations it is manifest that Justice emphasizes only one side of man, viz. his personal or universal side from the standpoint of which all men are *equal*; whereas Love emphasizes another, viz. his individual side from the standpoint of which all men are *unequal* or *unique*. But both are reconciled in a higher virtue, the virtue of Benevolence which may

be called the higher or perfect Justice. "Benevolence is more just than justice, because it is enlightened by the insight into that 'inequality' and uniqueness of individuals which is no less real than the 'equality' of persons." (Ibid, p. 276).

**Veracity**:—Veracity is a form of Benevolence; it is that form which manifests itself in the communication of thoughts. Veracity, like Benevolence, has two aspects: a *negative* aspect and a *positive*. The former corresponds to Justice and may be expressed in the form, "*Thou shalt not lie*"; the latter corresponds to Love of neighbour and may be expressed in the form, "*Serve thy neighbour with the truth.*"

(1) We have already discussed the meaning and scope of the formula "*Thou shalt not lie.*" (See. Chap. III, pp. 77-78). The violation of this negative side of the virtue of Veracity gives rise to the *vice of lying*. Lying is usually defined as willingly and wittingly speaking an untruth for deceiving others. But it should be remembered that we may lie to deceive others not only by spoken or written words but also by our acts, gestures and silence. If we act in such a wise as to show what we do not mean to show, we lie; if we fail to contradict what is not true by keeping silence either for want of courage or for fear of being disliked or blamed, we lie; if our gestures mean something other than what we care to show, we lie. *Equivocation* is a favourite form of lying; another favourite form of lying, developed specially by politicians, historians, reviewers, &c. is "to let the facts themselves lie." They do not faithfully represent the whole question, but misrepresent



one side of it, representing the other in a way that suits their purpose; they usually quote some words or phrases spoken or written about it by its defenders or refuters, and arrive at a solution as fictitious as possible. Thus by skilful selection and arrangement they make anything out of everything. "All these things," observes Dr. Paulsen, "come under the head of falsehood: to lie means to influence others to accept views which you do not regard as true yourself, by means of speech or silence, by simulation or dissimulation, and by the selection and arrangements of facts."

The most despicable and venomous form of lying is *calumny*; it may be defined "as the murderous attack of the assassin upon the ideal self of another." Another modified form of lying is *flattery*. Flattery is apparently pleasing, but really repulsive, because it deceives its victim under the guise of friendship; it is like a pot of poison having nectar in its mouth—it wholly demoralises both the flatterer and the person flattered. *Hypocrisy* is a form of flattery. The basis of hypocrisy is self-conceit; it is an attempt to show oneself what one is really not. "Falsehood raised to the highest power is *perjury*. It is the lie accompanied by the formal and solemn assurance that it is the truth. Perjury has everywhere and always been regarded as one of the greatest crimes, as a sign of extreme viciousness and baseness." (Dr. Paulsen).

Now an important question suggests itself: Why is lying morally wrong? The intuitionists answer that lying is vice, that it is inherently wrong and disgraceful. According to Kant Veracity is a duty to self, and

falsehood is the violation of it,—the abandonment of one's dignity as man; so he assimilates it to suicide, for as suicide destroys our physical life, so lying destroys our moral life, our dignity as man. But the real ground for which we condemn falsehood is that the consequences produced by it are subversive of our social life, falsehood is deception and is thus allied to injustice; its effects tend to destroy faith and confidence among men, and therefore subverts our social life: besides, lying is a mark of *cowardice*; a coward will lie, because he dares not face the situation directly, but a brave man will not lie in the same situation; lying is thus mean and despicable.

**The lie of necessity** :—Now, another important question is: Is lying always and under all circumstances morally wrong, or are there circumstances in which it is permissible and even morally necessary? This is undoubtedly a perplexing question, but a question which every moral philosopher should answer satisfactorily. In our ordinary judgments and actions we recognise the necessity of the "*necessary lie*." But there is a great deal of dispute among philosophers with regard to this question. Most of the intuitionists, particularly Kant, would condemn falsehood unconditionally. Kant observes: intentional lying is, under all circumstances, "by its mere form, a crime of man against his own person, and a baseness which must make a man despicable in his own eyes." Fichte once said: "I would not break my word even to save humanity." But this theory is contradicted by common experience; and its rigorism is based upon the rigoristic

view of morality as held by this class of ethical writers. But we have found in the sixth chapter of Book II, that only the teleological ethics offers the true explanation of a moral phenomenon; and by following its teachings we do not find any difficulty in explaining the question under consideration. If the ultimate standard of the morality of an act is its conduciveness to the common good, it is evident that an act of lying is bad when it produces effects which destroy or tend to destroy mutual confidence and thus disintegrate or tend to disintegrate the social organisation; but when the act does not produce such effects it is certainly *not* bad. For instance, to deceive a robber, an assassin, an enemy with arms in hands, by lying is not morally reprehensible. The reasons are obvious: here the act of lying produces effects which conduce to the well-being of the self or others, without destroying mutual confidence and leading to the disintegration of society. Even such an uncompromising rigorist as Dr. Martineau admits the justifiability of lying in these instances. (See Bk. I, pp. 145-50).

(2) *The positive side of Veracity* corresponds to Love of neighbour. As the negative side of Veracity is concerned with the expression of truth, so the positive side is concerned with the communication of truth. It is described in the form, "*Serve thy neighbour with the truth.*" This is no less a bounden duty than the former: because our action and therefore our welfare depend, to a considerable extent, upon the knowledge of truth; and such knowledge we are not always competent to acquire for ourselves, but must receive

from others who possess it. Hence the faithful communication of truth is as imperative as the faithful expression of it. This side of Veracity is, as we have said, allied to Love of neighbour, for the true Love of neighbour implies that we should faithfully communicate truth in order that he may conduct his life properly and safely. For these reasons it is evident that the positive Veracity gives real meaning and value to the negative: we should not tell a lie, because we should faithfully communicate truth to others. This positive Veracity manifests itself in various forms: firstly, in the form of *personal intercourse with others*, such as advice, instruction, admonition, and correction; secondly, in the form of the *public communication of the truth*, such as research, teaching and preaching. In all these we should as faithfully communicate truth as practicable.

(b) The virtues arising out of the duties to plants and lower animals have no special names; they may be included in Benevolence in its higher sense.

(c) The religious virtues arising out of the duties toward God may be summed up in *Piety* which includes not only the love of God, but also performance of deeds pleasing to Him. (तस्मिन् प्रीतिसखप्रियकार्यसाधनञ्च) This virtue is so comprehensive that it embraces within itself all other virtues. Our devotion to God includes our devotion to the welfare of all beings: it is the devotion to the well-being of the whole universe which is nothing but His manifestations. To be true to God is to be true to one's own self as well as to other beings. Piety

is therefore the highest virtue of which all other virtues are different forms or expressions.

**IX. The cardinal virtues** :—Plato classified the virtues into Wisdom or Prudence, Courage or Fortitude, Temperance or Self-restraint, and Justice or Righteousness. These virtues are called *cardinal virtues*, because they are supposed to be those upon which other virtues hinge or depend, (the word “cardinal” is derived from Latin *cardo*=hinge). Another meaning can be given to the term “cardinal” as used here: the cardinal virtues may mean those virtues which represent “the general elements involved in *all* virtuous activities.” Prof. Dewey accepts the latter interpretation. With him “cardinal virtues” means “cardinal or indispensable aspects of virtues”—the “traits essential to all morality,” so that those virtues are not *concrete primary* virtues but general traits of all concrete particular virtues. (See *Ethics*, p. 404). Prof. Alexander also seems to countenance this view: “As a classification of virtues,” says he, “it is a mere rough scheme, which serves its purpose only because Justice is used to include every thing not accounted for by the rest. But the real value of the scheme does not lie here, but in its describing certain elements which are present in all acts: and early as the generalisation is, it is made with an instinctive apprehension of the most important aspects of conduct.” (*Moral Order and Progress*, p. 250). But it is doubtful, as Prof. Mackenzie has observed, “whether this interpretation of the term is sanctioned by the best usage.”

## CHAPTER V.

### Merit and Guilt.

I. **Definition of Merit and Guilt:**—Merit is usually defined as that quality of virtue by which a man becomes worthy of a reward ; and Guilt as that quality which makes him worthy of punishment. According to this definition Merit and Guilt are relations in which an agent stands to reward and punishment respectively. The defect of this definition is that Merit and Guilt are understood by reference to some external considerations or results such as reward and punishment. But they should be understood in themselves independently of such considerations. Prof. Paul Janet defines Merit and Guilt thus: “I give the name of *merit* to the voluntary increase of our interior excellence ; that of *demerit*, to the voluntary diminution of this excellence. It is a sort of moral rise and fall in stocks, to borrow a financial term. The moral worth and value of man is an effect which, like economic values, may rise and fall, doing this purely by the will. He who does right gains in value ; he has merit ; his action is meritorious. He who does wrong loses merit : his action is one of demerit.” But “demerit is not merely the absence, or lack, of merit. The absence of merit consists in doing neither good nor evil, which is the case in indifferent actions. Demerit is not a simple negation, a defect, a lack : it is, so to speak, what is called in mathematics a negative quantity, which is not a mere nothing ; for

a *debt* is not merely a *not having* ; a *loss* is not merely a *non-acquisition*. These are minus quantities. Demerit is, then, a minus merit, a real loss, a diminution." (Theory of Morals, p. 449).

Dr. Martineau seems to entertain a view different from the foregoing. He distinguishes between *merit* and *approval*, *demerit* and *disapproval* : whatever is right is approved, and whatever is wrong is disapproved : but of what is right that only is entitled to merit, and of what is wrong that only to demerit, which goes beyond the limits of Duty or Obligation. Thus he divides the whole sphere of right into two parts : the one part is called the sphere of Duty, and the other, lying beyond it, the sphere of virtue. "Approval" and "disapproval" are applied to the former, "merit" and "demerit" to the latter. But he thinks that the more appropriate term "desert" should be employed to cover what lies within the field of Duty, and to take the place of the terms "approval" and "disapproval" when qualified by the epithets "good" and "bad." He then uses the terms *good and ill desert* to include "what lies within the sphere of pledged duty," and reserves the word "merit" for what lies beyond it." (See Types of Ethical Theory, vol. II, p. 245).

The distinction between these two theories is essential. With Prof. Janet the sphere of merit is co-extensive with the sphere of right—whatever is right is meritorious ; while with Dr. Martineau the sphere of merit is *not* co-extensive with the sphere of right, but only with a part of it, *viz.*, the sphere of virtue which lies beyond the sphere of Duty or Obligation. The

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latter theory seems to me erroneous ; for the distinction between the sphere of duty understood as the "duty of perfect obligation" and the sphere of virtue understood as the "duty of imperfect obligation" is untenable for reasons which have been described in § III of the last chapter. In the course of the criticism of this latter theory Prof. Janet has remarked : "In my view, there are no purely meritorious actions which would not be obligatory, and there are no obligatory actions which would not be meritorious." (Ibid, p. 450). Here he makes the sphere of duty or obligation co-extensive with that of the meritorious ; and previously he has made the sphere of the meritorious co-extensive with that of the right : thus, according to him, the three spheres of the right, the obligatory and the meritorious are co-extensive.

We shall consider another theory of merit considerably different from the foregoing. This is the theory of merit as given by Sir Leslie Stephen, which may be summarised as follows : "The moral code..... is briefly a statement of the conditions of the social vitality. A man is said to do his *duty* when he obeys this code. He has *merit* in so far as he obeys the law ;..... He is under an *obligation*, again, to obey the law, as *merit* implies the fulfilment of the obligation. He is *virtuous* so far as his character secures that his conduct shall be invariably in conformity with the law ;..... Merit .....clearly implies a close connection with virtue." But the terms "merit" and "virtue" are not, however, strictly synonymous. Two distinctions may be drawn between them : (1) "*Merit is the value set upon virtue.*"



"The conception of merit has thus a close analogy to the economical conception of value. We have to distinguish between the merit and the intrinsic virtue of an action as economists distinguish between the value of any commodity as equivalent to its intrinsic utility and what is called the value in exchange..... But the value in exchange depends upon the difficulty of attainment, and in the ordinary case, gravitates towards a certain average standard, dependent upon the various processes which constitute the industrial life of a community. The same statements may be made in regard to virtue and merit. Benevolence, we may say, is always benevolence, and truthfulness, truthfulness; but the estimate set upon these may vary within wide limits..... Thus, we may suppose that whilst the scale of duty remains fixed, the zero point of merit may shift upwards or downwards according to circumstance..... Merit thus carries with it a reference to an assumed average standard of conduct, and accrues to the agent in proportion as he reaches that standard. Absolute merit, if the phrase may be used, means a man's virtue, considered abstractedly from the social state and the difficulty of attaining it, whilst merit, in the more ordinary sense, takes those conditions into account. The sober man is in the first sense equally meritorious everywhere, because he everywhere shows the same quality; but sobriety may be called more meritorious in England than in a temperate country, because the average standard of temperance is lower." (Science of Ethics, pp. 258-60). (2) "*Merit is proved virtue.*" "We can only know a man's character through his actions.

We could not know for certain that Leonidas was a brave man until he had fallen at Thermopylae, for we cannot see a man's bravery..... We are quite right for honouring a man more who has given proofs of courage by his behaviour under danger than one whose courage is only inferred from more indirect inferences. If, then, we mean by merit proved virtue we may admit that of two equally virtuous men one may have more merit than another. We mean, not that he has more virtue, but that he has shown more." Again, "a man may be equally virtuous whether he has or has not had opportunities of showing his good qualities ; his intrinsic merit, therefore, is unaffected. But if by merit we mean the established claim upon our respect, his merit will, of course, be increased according to the opportunities of manifestations. There may have been a hundred men in the English fleet as brave as Nelson, but honour could only be paid to the one who had shown his valour. That only shows that honour in the world cannot be proportioned to the merit absolutely, but only to the merit which has become known." (Ibid, p. 262).

We should mark two important points in the above theory. In the first place, merit is connected with virtue, not with duty. In the second place, "its amount is measured by its *marketable value*, and is dependent on the opinions and wants of others, not on conditions personal to the agent himself." There is also a confusion. Merit is, at first, connected with duty and conceived of as "the fulfilment of obligation." But later on it is connected with virtue and conceived of as the value of it. We shall consider the tenability of the

second point in another connection. Here we shall consider whether merit ought to be connected with duty, or virtue, or with both.

We have got two theories. According to Prof. Janet merit is connected with right and duty ; and whatever is right or obligatory is meritorious : whilst Sir Leslie Stephen connects merit with virtue and holds that whatever is virtuous is meritorious. Which of these theories is the correct one ? To determine that we should take into consideration the relation as well as the distinction between duty and virtue. Virtue, as we have found in the last chapter, arises out of duty ; it is habit of doing duty. Thus duty and virtue are closely connected with each other. But they are still distinct : an act of duty is sporadic, isolated, while an act of virtue is habitual, an external expression of a habitual disposition. If in a particular instance I give alms to a poor, I do my duty ; but if in *all* instances I give alms to the poor, I have cultivated the virtue of charity. Again, the essence of duty consists in a strife between the higher and the lower self, between reason and inclinations ; whilst there is no such strife in virtue ; virtue itself is an impulse acquired by a series of acts of duty. Thus the sphere of duty is the sphere of the voluntary, whereas the sphere of virtue is the sphere of the involuntary or the spontaneous ; duty implies that by the free exercise of the will we should control the lower impulses in order to allow reason to prevail ; while virtue implies that the strife has already disappeared and we *spontaneously* do our duty. Therefore the life of duty is a life of struggle, difficulty, up-

hill march ; whereas the life of virtue is a life of peace, harmonisation, smooth progress. Now it cannot be denied that for the overcoming of such struggle and difficulty a man *deserves* something. The term "merit" is generally used to express this fact—to indicate that by doing his duty, by overcoming the struggle and difficulty occasioned by the opposition of inclinations to reason, he has deserved or earned something. In this way merit is connected with duty. And this is admitted by Sir Leslie Stephen. He says: "We assume, in fact, that merit can only attach to voluntary conduct ; for that is the same thing as to say that it attaches to the character. Conduct which does not spring from motives or from character is not, properly speaking, conduct at all. A man is not truly an agent in matters in which he is passive. In the next place, merit, as we have seen, has a reference to a certain assumed standard : a man is more or less meritorious as he is above or below the ordinary standard in respect of virtue. Therefore conduct has positive merit only in so far as it is more or less difficult for the average man. Thirdly, the criterion of merit is that the motive implied should be truly virtuous ; that is, that its agent is so far in conformity with the moral type. Now these conditions are frequently expressed by saying that merit implies free-will, that it implies effort, and that it implies a love of right for the sake of right. A man can have no merit so far as he acts under compulsion, or without difficulty, or from some other motive than a love of virtue." (Science of Ethics, pp. 266-67). Here he evidently uses the term "virtue" in

the sense of duty, for the conceptions of "voluntary conduct," "free-will" "effort," "difficulty," &c. are involved in the conception of duty, not of virtue.

Sir Leslie Stephen, as we have said, attaches merit to virtue. But he seems to have no clear and definite idea of virtue. In § 3 of his chapter on Merit he defines virtue thus : "He is *virtuous* so far as his character secures that his conduct shall be *invariably* in conformity with the law." Here he conceives virtue as a *habit*, because "invariably" means "habitually." But in the foregoing quotation he evidently uses virtue as equivalent to duty. So that it is not clear whether he attaches merit to duty or to virtue. But, leaving his theory aside, we should still consider whether merit may attach to virtue. I say it may. The reasons are these. We cultivate a virtue through a series of acts of duty each of which is meritorious. Now, if each act of duty is meritorious, because it requires the overcoming of struggle and difficulty, each act of virtue is also meritorious, because the cultivation of the virtue has already involved the overcoming of such struggle and difficulty. If we are responsible for each sporadic voluntary action, we are equally responsible for a habit of such actions. Therefore we are as responsible for an act of virtue as we are for an act of duty. Again, as we have found, virtues change and develop with the changed conditions of the individual and society. (See last chapter, §§ v & vi). So that virtues in the course of their change and development involve the overcoming of further struggle and difficulty. Thus virtues involve the overcoming of struggle and difficulty in two ways. Both

the cultivation and development of virtues require such struggle and difficulty. Hence merit should attach to virtue also ; the virtuous act should also be meritorious. (See also the last paragraph of this chapter).

We therefore conclude : a man earns merit when he acts *rightly* ; but a right or good act may be sporadic such as an act of duty, or habitual such as an act of virtue. Merit is attached to right act because it requires the overcoming of struggle and difficulty occasioned by the opposition of inclinations to reason. Though this opposition disappears in a virtuous act, yet the possibility of such an act requires the previous overcoming of such struggle and difficulty ; and requires the overcoming of further struggle and difficulty occasioned by the change and development of the virtues themselves. In this way merit is attached to both duty and virtue. But as the spheres of duty and virtue completely cover the sphere of the right, we can *generally* say, with Prof. Janet, that *whatever is right is meritorious, and that whatever is wrong is guilty*.

**II. Degrees of merit and Guilt.** :—We have said that whatever is obligatory or virtuous is meritorious, and whatever is the opposite is guilty. This does not imply that merit and guilt do not admit of degrees ; and that all good actions are equally meritorious. There are comparative degrees of obligation and goodness. One action may be more obligatory or better than another, though both of them are obligatory or good. Thus, if I give a few pice to a beggar I do what is obligatory or good, and if I save his life from danger I do also what is obligatory or good ; but it must be

admitted that these two acts are not *equally* obligatory or good. Again, if I unnecessarily injure a man slightly, I act wrongly ; and if I murder a man, I act also wrongly : but these two acts are not equally wrong. (See also Bk. I, pp. 93—94). Similarly there are comparative degrees of merit and guilt. All acts are not equally meritorious or guilty. We have found that merit or guilt is attached to actions according as the agent overcomes or yields to the struggle and difficulty raised by the opposition of inclinations to reason, or by the requirements of the change and development of virtues themselves. Here we should clear one point. Sometimes the struggle and difficulty are found to arise from the presence of unfavourable extraneous circumstances, or from what Sir Leslie Stephen calls “extrinsic motives,” or “external influences” or “temptations,” *e. g.* bribes, threats, dangers, &c. But the extraneous circumstances influence our action only by exciting corresponding inclinations in the mind. Thus, “bribes” act upon us by exciting *covetousness* ; “threats,” by exciting *fears*. So that in all instances struggle and difficulties come from the opposition between inclinations and reason, or from what Sir Leslie Stephen calls “internal motives.” Struggles and difficulties are, therefore, always *internal*.

**III. Measurement of Merit and Guilt :—** now the question is how do we measure the degrees of merit and guilt ? For the sake of convenience we shall answer the question separately in the cases of duty and virtue. (I). In the sphere of duty, (*a*) the rule for measuring the degrees of merit will be this : *the degrees of merit are proportioned to the degrees of the intensity*

*and amount of difficulty required to be overcome for the performance of a duty, and also to the importance or intrinsic value of it.* That the degrees of merit depend, not upon the degrees of obligation, but upon the degrees of difficulty overcome, may be proved by the fact that when an obligatory act is more difficult it brings greater merit than what it ordinarily does, or than what it does when it is easy. Take *Justice* as an instance. Every man is bound to give to each one his due. Suppose I am enjoying a large fortune without knowing that it belongs to another; after a long time I come to know the fact; being a well-to-do man I *easily* give it away to its real owner. Here I do what is just, and earn merit thereby. But suppose that I am a man who can hardly afford to give it away; if, still, I give it away, I act justly; but I do it at some cost, after overcoming some struggle and difficulty: my merit will therefore be greater than before. Suppose a more difficult situation: I am very old; I have none else to help me; if I part with the fortune, I am sure to die of starvation; still, I return it to its owner. Am I not entitled to more merit? Certainly I am. Invent all kinds of circumstances that will make the act far more difficult, and you will see that the degrees of merit are proportioned to the degrees of difficulty overcome.

It is not difficulty alone but also the *importance* of the duty that determines the degree of merit. All duties are not equally important. The near duties or the duties attached to my station are more important, because more obligatory, than the remote duties. The duty of taking care of one's own family is more bounden



than the duty of taking care of others. The duty of saving one's life from danger and destruction is far more important than the duty of helping one in one's ordinary needs. The duty of educating oneself properly is more bounden than the duty of educating others. So that the element of importance or intrinsic value of the duty is no less essential than its difficulty to determine the degree of merit.

(b) Now, as to guilt or demerit. The rule for measuring the degrees of guilt is different. It is this: *the degrees of demerit are proportioned to the degrees of "importance of the duties and the ease with which they might be accomplished."* "This is why demerit is, in one sense, the reverse of merit. When an action has very little merit, the reverse of that action would have very great demerit, and conversely." (Theory of Morals, pp. 451-52). Let us explain the rule by some illustrations. It is the duty of a judge to administer justice impartially. As in ordinary instances there is little temptation to do otherwise, he does it *easily*. The duty is both important and easy. Under these circumstances if he does what is just, his merit is *small* or *modest*, and if he does what is unjust his guilt or demerit is *great*. But suppose that in a special instance he is enjoined by the Government of the country to punish a political suspect who proves to be innocent by evidence put before him. If he acquits the accused he does what is just: but his merit is *great*, because the temptation to do otherwise is great. On the contrary, if he yields to the pressure and punishes the accused, he does what is unjust; but yet his demerit is *comparatively*

*small.* To love one's friends and help them in their needs is a noble duty; it is easy at the same time. Therefore the discharge of the duty brings only a modest merit. But the betrayal of friends, or the failure to help them in danger or crying needs, is base, and therefore brings great demerit. To take proper care of one's children is a noble and easy duty; and the opposite is ignoble. The former gives modest merit, whilst the latter great demerit. We may therefore conclude in the words of Prof. Janet that "it is correct to say in general, that the easier it is to perform an action, the less should one be excused from it, and consequently the more odious is it to refuse it."

We can combine the rules for measuring the degrees of both merit and demerit into one: *the greater the temptation overcome the greater the merit; and the less the temptation overcome the less the merit: the less the temptation yielded to, the greater the demerit, and the greater the temptation yielded to the less the demerit.* (See also Prof. Janet's *Theory of Morals*, Bk. III, Ch. XI, and Dr. Martineau's *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, BK. I, Chaps. III and VI, § 11).

(2) In the sphere of virtue, the rule for measuring the degrees of merit may be stated in the words of Sir Leslie Stephen: "*Merit is proportioned to virtue. That man is the most meritorious who under the same conditions is most virtuous, and that conduct the most meritorious which requires the greatest virtue for its performance.*" From this it follows that the degrees of merit are proportioned to the degrees of ease with which a duty is done; if one person does a duty with greater ease

than another, the former has greater merit than the latter, because the former is more virtuous than the latter. The rule for measuring the degrees of demerit may be deduced from the foregoing. *Demerit is proportioned to vice. That man is the most guilty who, under the same conditions is most vicious or least virtuous; and that conduct is the most guilty which requires the least virtue or the greatest vice for its performance.* One person, who does a duty with greatest difficulty than another, has greater demerit than the latter because he is more vicious or less virtuous than him.

We should consider another point here. Sir Leslie Stephen has held that "merit is proportioned to virtue." But he has modified this statement by introducing two qualifications: (1) "Merit is proved virtue." and (2) "Merit is the value set on virtue." (See above, § I). He admits that virtues have "intrinsic value" and also "extrinsic value." The former is absolute and independent of other people's opinions and wants, whilst the latter is entirely dependent upon those extraneous considerations. But we cannot practically measure the intrinsic value of a virtue, because we cannot directly penetrate and study other's mind. The case of the extrinsic value is different. It depends upon the opinions and wants of others which we can measure and examine. These remarks are true so far as they go. We have seen in the last chapter (§§ V & VI) that virtues have *universal* character which does not change with the changed conditions of individuals and society. To take examples as given by Sir Leslie Stephen him-

self, Benevolence is benevolence everywhere ; and Truthfulness, truthfulness. But, yet, all virtues are *relative* to the conditions of society and the stations of individuals therein. In this latter sense, virtues have not the same value everywhere at all times. Therefore the rule for measuring the degrees of merit in its complete form will be this : "merit is proportioned to virtue, by virtue being meant "*proved* virtue," i. e. virtue *as manifested in concrete conduct*, not a *mere* disposition which fails to issue in action ; and which is relative to the conditions and needs of society, and to the positions of individuals in that society. Demerit is proportioned to vice which means, not a *mere* disposition but an active effort that manifests itself in action, and which is antagonistic to the conditions and needs of society, and to the positions of individuals in that society.

Dr. Martineau objects to "the identification of degrees of merit with degrees of virtues." His reasons are these : "One who *has the greatest struggle to make* in order to achieve the task of duty is undoubtedly *inferior in virtue* to the man who throws it off with ease ; but one who *makes the struggle*, however great, has higher merit in the act than the man to whom it costs nothing." We should notice here that he does not deny merit to a virtuous act, but simply says that an act of duty, which involves struggle and difficulty, has higher merit than a corresponding virtuous act which does not cost the agent anything. But his remark does not seem to be justifiable. Here he compares the value of a sporadic act of duty with that of virtue to acquire which the agent has had a good deal

of trouble and difficulty to fight with, perhaps, for a considerable portion of his life. The value of a sporadic struggle, however great, is undoubtedly far less than the value of a continuous struggle which a man has to overcome for the cultivation of a virtue. A virtuous act has merit, not because it is done with ease, but because it is the result of a strenuous struggle. Moreover, the development of virtue requires the overcoming of further struggle and difficulty. For these reasons we should rather say that a virtuous act has higher merit than a sporadic act of duty.

Again, Dr. Martineau himself is not free from confusion. In the chapter on Merit and Demerit (Types, Vol, II, pp. 80—83) he deals with them as connected with acts of duty, whilst in another place (Ibid, p. 245) he reserves them for acts of virtue. We should, however, remember that the rule for measuring merit and demerit in the sphere of duty is not applicable to the measurement of them in the sphere of virtue, because the two spheres, as we have proved before, are distinct, though related.

**IV. Is merit subjective or objective?**—We have found above that merit is attached to rightness or goodness. But we are obliged to do what is right and to avoid what is wrong. Therefore we have no right to demand merit for what we are obliged to do. Moreover, we can never do our duty in the best way possible; we always feel that we have fallen short of what is required of us; our actual conduct always falls considerably short of the ideal. Under these circumstances the attitude of our own mind towards our con-

duct, however right, is always that of an unprofitable servant. We do not feel nor have any merit for our good works. Thus from the *subjective* point of view *merit is an illusion*. Is there, then no merit? Yes, there is. Our good works have a subjective side, and also an objective. They have value for us as well as for society. Society wants them for its own well-being. The idea of merit is expressive of this social value. Thus from the *objective* or social point of view our good works are meritorious. For these reasons, "the recognition of merit takes the form of reward, and it is a sign of a widespread spirit of justice when real merit meets with appropriate reward," (Dr. D'Arcy, Ethics, p. 184).

From the above follows one important conclusion which has been discussed elsewhere. If it is true that an act is meritorious inasmuch as it has a value for us and for society, then an act of virtue is no less meritorious than an act of duty, for both of them have such a value; or rather the former has a far greater value than the latter, because the one is habitual and permanent and the other is sporadic and casual. (See, above, § I).

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## CHAPTER VI.

### Moral Institutions.

I. **Relation of Right, Duty and Virtue to the Social Institutions:**—We have shown in the first chapter of this Book that the individual and society are *organically* related to each other. Every complex social institution corresponds to an “apperceptive mass” in the individual mind, and every sub-group in the institution corresponds to a sub-group in the “apperceptive mass”; and thus the individual mind as a whole corresponds to society as a whole. Therefore the individual life is a specialisation of the social life; and the rights, duties and virtues in and through which the former gradually realises itself find a field for their exercise in the social institutions. In the preceding chapters we have found also that the rights, duties and virtues are mere means by which we realise the supreme good which includes not only our own good but also the good of society; and that, thus, they are *relative* to the conditions and needs of society. They are *individual* in as far as they are to be exercised by the individual; they are *social*, in as far as they originate and exist in connection with society. Ordinarily we exercise our rights, do our duties and act virtuously without any distinct consciousness of the common good realisable through them. We are more or less spontaneous in the daily routine of our life-work. But the

consciousness of the common good becomes explicit only when we unite ourselves with the social institutions. For, the social institutions are organisations or unions whose objects are pre-eminently to realise a common good. The different social institutions supply us with the ideas of different common goods, and society as an organic whole gives us the idea of the supreme common good. Thus we learn, for the first time, what a common good is from our voluntary connections with one or more social institutions. Only after that, with the development of the reflective power we come to learn that there is a supreme good which includes the good of all persons, of all societies, and of all beings and things; in a word it is the good of the whole universe. Thus the social institutions are the fields where we learn, for the first time, what our rights, duties and virtues are. In our childhood the rights and duties seem to be thrust upon us from outside by external authorities. Whether we will or not we feel obliged to exercise our rights and do our duties. In fact we have no idea of right and duty in the beginning. Family education, as Dr. Bain holds, plays an important part at this time in shaping our ideas of rights and duties. As Dr. D'Arcy observes: "The family takes the child's moral life into its own life and prescribes his duties. On the side of the child, moralisation proceeds as he learns to identify his life with that of the family, adopting its ideals and doing the duties it demands. With years new relations are formed, and wider horizons become visible by means of larger institutions. The school, the university, the work shop, the office, the



church, the state, prescribe new duties, give greater opportunities of individual development, make possible new ideals. By these means all ordinary duties are presented to the individual. He has not to live a life of perpetual hesitation asking, what ought I to do next? He has simply to do what lies to his hand waiting to be done. Yet, in doing all these duties in obedience to the demand of society, the man is no mere slave of convention. He is living the moral life of a freeman. If he perform his duties, as by a sort of compulsion, because he identifies himself with the social system, then indeed he is a slave. But the more he identifies private good with common good, the more, that is, he finds his good in his share of the common social life, the more moral he is and the more freedom does he possess. Only thus can self be realised and freedom attained." (Short Study of Ethics, pp. 194-95).

From the above it is evident that the moral fullness or greatness can be attained only by identifying the individual life more and more with the social life. Cut off all connection with society and the moral growth of your life will be stunted—your life itself will be "selfish, short, brutish." Therefore the only means by which we can morally elevate our life is to secure for ourselves wider and wider positions in society in which we shall have greater and greater opportunity for identifying our own good with the good of society; and thereby to have wider and wider scope for the exercise of our rights, the discharge of our duties and the cultivation of our virtues. Our connections with the social institution supply us with such positions, opportunities and

scopes. For these reasons the social institutions are called *moral institutions*.

This does not, of course, imply that all societies are perfect, or all social institutions are good. Like individuals they are more or less imperfect—more or less imperfect embodiments of the moral ideal; yet every society is more or less *moral* in as far as it is more or less *coherent*, i. e. organised with a view to a common end. Every social institution serves a common purpose and in as far as that purpose is good, i. e. conducive to the well-being of society as a whole, it is moral. For these reasons it may be generally held that, the immediate duty of a man consists in accepting the position given him by society, and in fulfilling all the functions attached to that position, or in doing all those things which are expected of him. It is not, of course, meant that he should blindly follow the standards dictated by the institutions which give him such positions. The various institutions and sub-groups under them follow standards of different degrees of relative perfection or imperfection, and often inconsistent with one another. Hence his connections with two or more institutions will urge him to follow standards of different moral value, or even inconsistent with one another. The consequence of this will be that he will be expected to do different and even inconsistent things; and if he means to make his life progressive it will assume the form of an everlasting conflict between what *is* and what *ought to be*—between the different and inconsistent standards supplied by the actual institutions, and the standard supplied by his ever-developing power of reflection. Thus the moral

life of a man involves contest in two ways: in the first place, he has to make a constant effort to adjust his private interest to the interests of society: in the second place, he has to adjust his social interests to the interests of a still wider and higher life, the notion of which he derives from his ever-growing reflective power. Therefore his moral progress consists in the gradual adjustment of his own individual life and the life of society to the moral ideal.

**II. Need for Criticism of Society and Social Institutions:—**We have said before that no society, no social institution is perfect. Like an individual, every society or every social institution is far from being perfectly good. And as different individuals possess different degrees of goodness or badness, so different societies and social institutions possess different degrees of perfection or imperfection. Hence the need for criticism of society and social institutions. It is evident that the ultimate criterion of such criticism will be the moral ideal itself. We can criticise the actual life of a man by reference to the life of the Ideal man. Similarly we can criticise the actual state of a society or of a social institution by reference to the state of the Ideal Society or Ideal Institution. But we have shown before (see chap. I of this Book) that the ideal of a man is the same as the ideal of society in which he lives and has his being. The ideal man, as H. Spencer says, can exist only in the ideal social state. Hence there is only *one* ultimate criterion by reference to which we can criticise the state of both the individual and society or a social institution: this, as we have said, is the moral ideal which consists in the

perfection of human nature, or in the perfection of society. We are now going to consider what ought to be the ideal constitution of society and of some important social institutions.

III. **The Social State** :—Justice is the ultimate foundation of all social organisation. Therefore the degree of justness of arrangement in a social organisation determines the degree of its solidarity, and the degree of solidarity is directly proportional to the degree of opportunity it gives for the promotion of the ideal life of its members. In the ideal social state the arrangement must be perfectly just so that the ideal life of its members may be promoted as efficiently as possible. Therefore the criterion of testing the goodness of a society should consist in the perfect opportunity and aid which its arrangement affords for the development of each member's rational life, or for the attainment of the supreme end of his life. That constitution of a society is therefore unjust or falls short of the ideal which fails to satisfy these conditions. For instance, the constitution of that society is bad in which there are some classes so enslaved by others that they are incapable of developing their lives properly ; or in which there are some classes so poor or so hard-worked, or so dependent upon others that they have no time or opportunity for cultivating their higher and nobler faculties, and thereby developing them in order to make progress in their moral life. That social institution is also unjust in which "the idle are protected and set in power, and the laborious are crushed down and degraded" ; or where powers and privileges are distributed, not

according to merit, but according to extraneous considerations such as those of caste, clan, riches, &c. In short any such arrangement which impedes the progress of moral life of individuals vitiates the social organism and makes it morally bad. But these do not indicate that every member of a society should be treated as *the absolute end*, i. e., never as means to the end of others. The individuals living in a society are integral units of one and the same organism. Therefore the end of each is the end of all; and the end of none can be the absolute end, for otherwise the ends of others will be *mere* means to this end, and never ends in themselves. These considerations show that each member of a society should be treated both as an end and as a means at the same time. Or in other words, the end of each should be the end of all and *vice versa*. Hence the arrangement of a society should be such as to give perfect opportunity for the realisation of the end of each member and the end of all at the same time.

As we have said, the actual state of every society is far off from the ideal state. For this reason it has been the chief effort of all good and wise men in all ages to reform society and raise it to a higher level. But the construction of a just arrangement of society is always so complicated that it is not easy to suggest the best and the most efficient way in which this can be done. Yet, the following points may be attended to in such construction.

We shall not rely much upon *legal enactments*. In all instances a just arrangement of society cannot be *enforced* with much advantage. Under some circum-

stances it is not of much use. For instance, when the people is naturally lawless, legal enactments can do very little to make them law-abiding ; on the contrary, when the people has become law-abiding, laws are unnecessary and superfluous. Again, laws being abstract or general, they cannot cover nor explain all the aspects of the concrete facts of life. Furthermore, the usefulness of laws changes with the change of the conditions of life ; the laws which were useful at one time become positively harmful at another. It is therefore sometimes important to induce a people to develop good habits of action and opinion in himself rather than to guide himself always by hard and fast rules. Nevertheless the positive enactments are not altogether useless. For the good habits of action and opinion are generally formed very slowly ; and a large number of people, in every society, always remains quite unaffected by any public opinion. But it should always be remembered that the ultimate purpose of laws is to guide people into the right channel when they are not prone to direct themselves into it : sometimes, therefore, it becomes necessary and desirable to repeal them after they have fulfilled their purpose. Indeed, laws, with their rigid character and narrow injunctions, are positively harmful to those who have risen above them, i. e. have cultivated good habits of thought and action, and have, thereby, risen to a life of higher freedom and virtue. The life of law is a life of necessity—a life of bondage ; whilst the life of virtue is a life of true freedom—a life of liberation. Laws are necessary, therefore, as preparation, the purpose of law being wholly

propædæutic. But when a man has learned to live freely in accordance with the moral ideal, he has risen above the law—he moves in a higher and wider sphere where the positive enactments are needless and even harmful. The idea of this truth was in the mind of St. Paul when he spoke of the Jewish Law as “a school-master to lead men to Christ.” The same idea is embodied in the following lines of the *Bhagabatgita*—

“यात्रानर्थं च दपानि सर्व्वतः संप्लुतोदके ।  
तावान् सर्व्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विज्ञानतः ॥”

i. e. as much need (there is) for a small pond when all place is inundated, so much need (there is) for the Vedas when a man has known God.

**IV. The Social Institutions :—**The social institutions, as we have said, are those in which the rights, duties and virtues find fields for exercise ; they are the different modes in which people group themselves and thus bring themselves into relations with one another. We are now going to briefly notice the important moral features of some of these institutions.

(1) **The family.**—The psychological basis of the family is *love* or *affection* ; but as it is found in the most perfect family life, it is a complex sentiment which is not only a pure feeling or emotion, but also, at the same time, a purpose or will : both these two, again, are considerably modified and strengthened by parenthood, and social and religious influences.

(i) (a) **The emotional and instinctive basis** of the family life has two sources : in the first place, it

is due to *natural sympathy, founded on similar tastes and interests*, between a male and a female. This sympathy grows deeper by long association, by living a common life as when there are children or a common work. But this is not all. Mere sympathy, however deep, is something different from true love as exists between the husband and the wife ; a friend is different from a lover. The true conjugal love includes something more than sympathy—something more than the superficial attraction of mind for mind ; it requires also “a deeper congeniality of the whole person” which cannot be precisely formulated. In the second place, it is due to the instinctive attraction of “opposite or contrasting dispositions and physical characteristics.” It is a patent fact that there exists an instinctive or natural attraction between man and woman. Some writers have described such attraction as that which exists between fire and clarified butter. This instinctive attraction may be biologically explained. “From the biological point of view it was a most successful venture when Nature, by some happy variation, developed two sexes with slightly different characters and made their union necessary to the continuation of life in certain species. By uniting in every new individual the qualities of two parents, the chances of variation are greatly increased, and variation is the method of progress. This long process has developed certain principles of selection which are instinctive. Whether they are the best possible or not, they represent a certain adjustment which has secured such progress as has been attained, and such adaptation to environ-



ment as exists, and it would be unwise, if it were not impossible, to disregard them. Marriages of convenience are certainly questionable from the biological standpoint." (Pofs. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 597).

But the instinctive basis is not sufficient guide for a happy family life. Man is not merely an animal; he is also a rational and social being: so that he cannot trust his instinct only, but must also be guided by his reason and social demands in establishing his family. It is not safe to depend on feeling, because it is the most variable element of his nature, and may, thus, cease to influence him after a period of time. This is the reason why marriage based on mere love frequently leads to implicit or explicit disunion and unhappy life, if not prevented by other considerations. Hence the need for enlightenment of feeling by reason. Irrational love is no love at all; it sees only the surface; it is guided by superficial considerations such as physical beauty, &c.; it cannot therefore be the true basis of marital union.

(b) But no feeling whether enlightened or not is a sufficient moral basis of the family life. The feeling as divorced from will is an abstraction; it is therefore worthless and is incapable of forming the moral basis of the family. The love or affection on which the family is founded is "the resolute purpose in each to seek the other's good, or rather to seek a *common* good which may be attained only through a common life involving mutual self-sacrifice. It is the good will of Kant specifically directed toward creating a common good. It is the formation of a small 'kingdom of

ends' in which each treats the other 'as end,' never as means only; in which each is 'both sovereign and subject'; in which the common will, thus created, enhances the person of each and gives it higher moral dignity and worth." (Ibid, p. 580). As we have found, from the biological point of view the male and the female are insufficient by themselves and supplement each other. This union, founded on true rational love, makes both of them complete, the insufficiency of the one being rectified by the other. In this way the instinctive basis of the family is converted into a voluntary basis by mutual aid and enlargement.

(c) The deeper union of feeling and will, which constitutes the true conjugal love, requires common interest for its permanence and completion. The most effective object of this common interest is the children. Parental affection evoked by them is the most powerful impetus for actuating the parents to take proper care of them, to educate them, to make them fit for a business or profession upon which depends the union already effected by sympathy and will. Not only so, the new interest thus created through the medium of the children helps considerably to develop the personality of the parent along with the development of the capacities of the children.

(d) The relations between the husband and the wife, parent and the children are not merely personal relations; they are also social and religious relations. The family is a social institution, and its members are also members of society. Thus, "the act of establishing the

family signifies, indeed, the entrance into fuller participation in the social life; it is the assuming of ties which make the parties in a new deeper sense organic parts of humanity. This social and cosmic meaning is appropriately symbolized by the civil and religious ceremony." (Ibid, p. 582). The fact that in all civilized countries the marital rights as well as the rights of the children to be properly supported and educated are recognised by society and enforced at law, clearly shows that society continues to take interests in the well-being of the family. In all civilized societies marriage is solemnized by religious rites, and in some the marital rights are held as sacred rights.

The relation between parents and children, brothers and sisters, are likewise natural. The love which binds them together is also instinctive. But this instinctive love is broadened and deepened by long association and mutual intercourse. But the members of the family are not united only by love. This love is enriched and enlightened by the social needs and influences. As Prof. Dewey has truly observed: "In fact, from the point of view of the social organism as a whole the family has two functions: as a smaller group, it affords an opportunity for eliciting the qualities of affection and character which cannot be displayed at all in the larger group; and, in the second place, it is a training for future members of the larger group in those qualities of disposition and character which are essential to citizenship." (Ibid, p. 584).

(ii) **The moral basis of the family:—**The

*moral basis* of the family is benevolence, *i. e.* love enlightened by justice. The family is, therefore, the miniature form of society. The essential characteristic of the family is, thus, the same as that of society, *viz. unity-in-variety*; and the same virtue which sustains the organism of society, is also the virtue which sustains the institution of the family, *viz. benevolence*. The family is, thus, a factor in the national whole, the society. "Hence, its nature and sanction are ethical,—it rests neither on mere feeling on the one hand, nor on mere contract on the other. It has a public side, and the acceptance of a universal obligation by a declaration in explicit language, in face of the community, is an essential part of marriage, and not a mere accident or accessory, as the votaries of feeling have urged. The ethical aspect of the family shows itself in the nature and organisation of the household, as an institution embodying permanent interests and relations of the two persons who are its head, and as an organ of public duties in the bodily and spiritual nurture of the children." (Dr. Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, pp. 270-71).

This permanence and equality of relation between the husband and the wife as implied in its moral aspect, implies *monogamy* and only in the monogamous family the essential conditions of a household which is the embodiment of the ethical order, are fully satisfied. Where this equality is not secured by reciprocal love, the consequence is the undue subordination of the one to the other. But no state regulations can prevent it without unduly interfering with the individual liberty. The only

check which may be somewhat effective is the development of a strong public opinion against it. The law may be useful in so far as it may remove the obstacles standing in the way of recognising such equality.

Here an important question suggests itself: is moral progress possible without the family? This question is analogous to the question: can human nature change? It will be certainly idle to try to answer these questions. What we are primarily concerned with is to accept the facts as they are and attempt to determine the distinctive part they play in human life. Of course, it must be admitted that so long as man remains a spiritual animal, there must be some such institution, whatever may be its form. But what will be the precise nature of such an institution in circumstances unknown to us, it will be very difficult to predict.

(2) **The civic community**:—When a person attains majority and becomes more or less independent of the family, he finds himself thrown apparently into a world of conflicting self-interests. He must now work independently to make his living, or to protect and administer his property. In this way he becomes connected with others "only by the system of wants and works, with the elementary function which is necessary to it, viz. its police functions and the administration of justice." This phase of social life may be called *civic community*, or *Bourgeois Society* as called by Hegel. It is the opposite extreme of the family life. The civic community is a number of families combined together into an aggregate or system by the bonds of interests

of industry and business, in which a man has to find his work and do it. The mental counterpart of the civic society is a system of "definite though limited aims, calculation and self-interest." But still it is not a system of self-interests only, for a system of exclusive self-interests is an abstraction—an impossibility. An exclusive self-interest defeats its end when absolutely separated from the interests of others. Hence the civic community—the world of economics and industry—"is not a separate reality but only an appearance within a larger system (i. e. the State). The member of it is not so detached as he may seem, or think. He is within, and sustained by, the general life of the State, as the aims which are his motives in business or industry are within and inseparable" from the aims of the State. Thus the civic community is a phase of the State; and the working of the former shows an inevitable connection with the latter, and leads up to it. We shall now consider two forms of the functions of the civic community, viz. the form which can be entrusted to individuals under the protection of the State, and the form which should be undertaken by the community as a whole.

(a) **The Workshop:**—In the workshop or the place of business and industry the relations between the parties are more or less external. These relations are not founded on mental love, as the family relations are, but on contract; moreover the family relations are relations of equality at least among the members who have attained majority, whilst the industrial relations

are relations of *subordination*. No doubt in family too we find a relation of subordination particularly between the heads of the family and the immature children. But here this kind of relation is necessary for the protection and development of the latter ; in the industrial world the relation of subordination is voluntarily created, not for the protection and development of one of the contracting parties, but for the attainment of some external ends. But, yet, the strictly voluntary character of the industrial relation should not exclude themselves from the contract of the State. The contracts may be so unfair that they may prejudice the interests of others, or of society as a whole. In these circumstances the State regulations should be made to secure the fairness of contract and to prevent subordination from its assuming a form (e. g. slavery, prostitution, &c.) which is positively immoral. But, in some instances, it is contended, *mere* contract does not secure that form of subordination which is required by the nature of the case. For instance, the relation between the master and the servant should be one of pure subordination ; it should be based upon love and kindness, not on mere contract. The contention is true so far as it goes. But it cannot be denied that such relation is a relation of contract ; a servant is not born a servant ; he has voluntarily made himself such : again, contract does not necessarily exclude love and kindness ; every human relation should contain an element of love and kindness, otherwise it will be harsh and productive of undesirable consequences. It is also true that a parental

relationship, as between a master and a servant, may lead to tyranny, when there is no love to sustain and sweeten it. For these reasons some contend that to prevent injustice contract should be made the basis of the relation between a master and a servant. But they forget that absence of mutual love may pass into tyranny even in the case of a husband and a wife whose relation should be one of equality. So that contract which is, by its nature, incapable of binding soul with soul except externally and temporarily should not be made the basis of any human relation save when by the nature of the case the relation should be temporary and external.

The next important question is, what kinds of business or industry should be encouraged or discouraged? Here we should distinguish two questions: the question, how can we advantageously promote or impede an industry? and the question, what kind of industry *should be* promoted or impeded? To answer the first is the function of Economics and Political Philosophy; to answer the second is that of Ethics. Those industries are morally justifiable which produce objects that are necessary for the preservation and advancement of human life, and the ways in which they are produced should not, at the same time, be injurious to such life. And contrarywise, those industries are morally unjustifiable whose products as well as the means by which they are produced are injurious, directly or indirectly, to human life. But in any case when we are to calculate the moral advantage or disadvantage of an industry we should take into consideration all its good



and bad consequences, and balancing one set against the other we should draw our inferences. If we find that the advantages are, on the whole, good, the industry must be good, otherwise it must be bad.

(b) **The Local Administrative Institutions**:—*Municipality, District Board, &c*:—In the world of industry, contract is the basis of all relations; but in the civic community there are other relations which cannot be trusted to the care of individuals, because they do not express purely individual interests, but the interests which are common. For instance, the sanitary and educational arrangements, “the enforcement of precautions against accidents, the prevention of adulteration of foods and other forms of deception, and the securing of the means of livelihood to those who are incapacitated for labour,” all are common interests. These public functions should be undertaken, at least partly, by the supreme government; but they should be managed, as far as possible, by each district for itself. What will be the details of such provisions, and how far the state should undertake them, and how far each district, are problems which must be dealt with by the Science of Politics.

(3) **The State**:—The State or the political organisation is the higher and the more comprehensive social institution in which the family and the civic community find their completion and security. It, therefore, sums up all other social institutions except perhaps the church, which is, from one point of view, higher than the State. The Greeks went still further

and identified the State with society ; they had no idea of a non-political society—the State and society were synonymous terms for them ; they could not conceive that the social life was different from the life of citizenship. But the great drawback of the Greek conception of the State is that it emphasized the importance of the State so much that it undermined that of the individual altogether, denying even the private rights of property and the family to him. With the Greeks, as Prof. James Seth has observed, “the only perfect social organisation is the communistic State, which directly and immediately controls the individual, and recognises no rights, individual or social, but its own.” Hence there was a natural reaction against the theory, which exhibited itself in the form of *Individualism* and *Cosmopolitanism*. This latter theory went to the opposite extreme and emphasized the importance of the individual at the expense of that of the State. Its tendency was to emancipate the former from the absolute control of the latter. This opposite tendency of Individualism resulted ultimately in *Anarchism* and *Nihilism*. Hence, there was a third attempt to revise this modern theory of the State by discovering a higher conception of it. If we examine Individualism we find that it is self-contradictory and therefore suicidal. As Prof. James Seth has put it : “Individualism has almost reached its *reductio ad absurdum* ; the principle of the mere particular has, here as elsewhere, proved itself to be a principle of disintegration. That each shall be allowed to live for

himself alone is seen to be an impossible and contradictory ideal. Experience has taught us that the State is the friend of the individual, securing for him that sacred sphere of individual liberty which, if not thus secured, would soon enough be entered and profaned by other individuals. The evils of a non-political or anti-political condition of atomic individualism have been brought home to us by stern experiences and by the threatenings of experiences even sterner and more disastrous." (Principles. pp. 284-85). Thus the State is not something entirely alien to the individual, but in their true being they are identical. This is, in fact, a return to the Greek conception of the State with the modification that the true interests of the State and the true interests of the individual, the rights of the one and the rights of the other, are not antagonistic but identical.

*Is, then, the State an end-in-itself?* From the point of view of ethics, the State is a *means*, not an end-in-itself; for, as we have found, the State is a social institution and as such is an embodiment of the moral order—an external expression of it; it is that in which the personality of the individual finds scope for its exercise and development. Hence, observes Prof. James Seth, "the State exists for the sake of the person, not the person for the sake of the State. The ethical unit is the person; and the function of the State is not to supersede the person, but to aid him in the development of his personality—to give him room and opportunity. It exists for him, not he for it; it is his sphere, the

medium of his moral life." (Ibid, p. 287). This fact is sometimes obscured by drawing a hard and fast line of distinction between the "State-action" and "individualism." But we should remember here that individuality and personality are not identical terms. Individualism magnifies individuality, while the State emphasizes personality, of man. The "State-action" interferes with the individual, *i.e.* the selfish side of man—with his private inclinations, not with his personal, *i.e.* his altruistic, inclinations. It is rather the main function of the State to foster and develop the latter, and to suppress the former. "State-interference" therefore means interference with the actions of the selfish men, not those of the unselfish. Thus, there is no real antagonism between the State and the individual. For further development of this point see Chap. I of this Book.

In this fact, namely, that the State is the concrete embodiment of the personality of men, lies the ethical basis of the State. "The essence of the State is sovereignty, and the maintenance of the sovereign power through coercion or control. In order that each may have freedom of self-development each must be restrained in certain ways." (Ibid, p. 289-90). Does this sovereignty of the State supplant or destroy personality? Two extreme answers are possible: on the one hand, *Anarchism* repudiates any control of the self from without; it contends that any such control destroys the freedom of man. This theory evidently confounds liberty with license; absolute freedom is

inconceivable and absurd. (See Book II, Chap. X. c.). True freedom implies control of the inclinations by reason, and as in most instances these inclinations are naturally preponderant over reason, a higher authority should intervene to check and guide them into proper channel. Otherwise the life of individuals will be a life of constant war, as Hobbes conceived it to be originally. On the other hand, *despotism* denies all freedom to the individual. This theory, thus destroying the very essence of man makes him a mere tool or instrument.

The real reconciliation of these two extreme views lies in the true solution of the problem of freedom. True freedom is not, as we have said, license or unbounded freedom; it is self-determination which, again, implies both freedom and necessity, *i.e.* control of the lower inclinations by forming good rational habits of will or action. (For fuller discussion of this point, see Book II, Chap. X). And the State-control means the control of these lower inclinations which prompt us to war with others in order to afford scope for the development of personality; the State exists for the interests of personality, and therefore the system of the State-laws by which it controls the individual caprices is superior in right to the lower inclinations. Thus "the political order foreshadows the moral order itself; it is a version, the best available for the time and place and circumstances, of that order." (*Ibid*, p. 293). From this it is also evident that the attempt of the individual to go against the State is morally improper. But the action of the State also should not be inconsistent with

the moral order, because its value and authority rest on that order. As it is the duty of the subject to obey its laws, so it is the duty of the State to discharge its proper function,—to protect the sphere of personality.

The ethical functions of the State should, therefore, be based upon *justice* and *love* or in one word *benevolence*. But ordinarily justice is more conspicuous in State-action than love. The function of justice is negative and should consist in protecting the individual from the encroachments of others in so far as these encroachments hinder the opportunity of his self-realisation. The function of love is positive and should consist in helping the individual in improving the conditions of his moral life as far as practicable. The former function is mainly directed to protect "the interests of 'being,'" whereas the latter, "the interests of 'well-being.'" But, as the interests of being are more imperative than the interests of well-being the function of justice should be prior to the function of love. This is the reason why in all State-action the former is more prominent and imperative than the latter. Thus, the State being the supreme controller of all social relations, it should make those laws which will protect the interests of being, and at the same time promote the interests of well-being. The State laws which go to the contrary are therefore injurious and morally bad. What kinds of work may be more efficiently undertaken by the State cannot be discussed in ethics. But whatever work it undertakes, it is certain that its object should always be to protect the life and promote the welfare of the subjects.

(4) **The university** :—One of the most important actions of the State is the establishment of the university. The university is an institution whose sole function is to provide for the mental and physical culture of the people. The different schools and colleges under its supervision are the centres of such culture. But those schools and colleges should not be mere unconnected units only mechanically related with one another and with the university; they should be rather the units of a system or organisation, the parts of a whole deriving their life and inspiration from one another and from the whole. The true university is a living organism, not merely an accidental product of alien forces; it is the external concrete expression of the national spirit; it is the living representation of the rational order where the minds of individuals find scope for the exercise and development of their powers. Like society itself every institution in it is an organisation, not a mechanical aggregate of unconnected units. Therefore a university which is only a mechanical aggregate of some educational institutions is not worth the name; it cannot serve that purpose for which an important social institution exists: an institution which is nothing more than a mechanical aggregate cannot have very abiding and useful place in society which itself is an organism. Hence a university, which is merely "an examining body" and has no direct and efficient control over the educational institutions included in it, should be condemned, because it is unable to provide for that kind of education which really conduces to the mental and physical

development. It itself is a dead body ; and the education which it provides for is likewise dead, leaving no animating effect upon the minds of the students. The only thing it encourages is cramming, a dreadful thing which drains the life-blood of the victims, giving them nothing substantial in return. The worth of a university should therefore be measured, not by the number of graduates that pass out through its gate every year, or by the pedantic curriculum of study that it prescribes to be learned by the students, but by the worth of education that it provides for. We have said before that the object of a true university should be to provide for all kinds of culture. But the tendency of modern universities has been to make arrangements for what is called *secular* education, i. e. education of only the intellectual and physical capacities. This is undoubtedly deplorable, because it is productive of many evil consequences. This tendency is based upon the erroneous supposition that the human mind is divisible into parts unconnected with one another, and that a particular part, viz. here the intellect, may be educated and developed quite independently of the education of the rest. This unsound view regarding the nature of mind has been vehemently condemned by all the leading psychologists in modern times. The moral and religious education should, therefore, form part of the object of the university as much as the intellectual and the physical. How far the university should interfere with the internal managements of the educational institutions, and how far they should be left to the managing



bodies of their own are subjects which cannot be discussed in an ethical treatise.

(5) **The Church** :—From one point of view the church is the highest institution of society. It supplies those needs of the people that are the highest and noblest ; its function consists in securing the realisation of the highest moral ideal in the relations of men, and in furnishing a centre for moral and especially, religious culture. It should be not only a place of offering prayer to or of worshipping of, God but a school of moral and spiritual training ; it should, therefore, be not a mere mechanical congregation of different classes of people but a living organism where they will meet as its integral members, not as unconnected units gathered together for a short time. The relations among its members should be as *organic* as the relations between the parts themselves of a system, and between these parts and the system itself. Like the members of a system the members of a church should be bound up together by a common animating spirit ; because only then they may develop their moral and spiritual capacities, and cultivate those moral and spiritual virtues which are necessary for the attainment of the moral and spiritual ideal. A church, where that kind of relations among its members fail to exist, is a thing which may outwardly exhibit the symptoms of life, but is inwardly dead ; it cannot animate them with that kind of moral and spiritual fervour which is indispensable for the moral and spiritual progress. As a dead university does nothing but fosters and encourages

intellectual cramming, so a dead church does nothing but fosters and encourages moral and spiritual cramming: both are not only not useful, but positively harmful; they fail to produce the truly intellectual, moral, and spiritual men but produce only the intellectual, moral, and spiritual impostors. Again, the church being the place where people meet to learn how to best realise and attain the highest moral and religious ideal it is proper that all kinds of sectarian and partisan spirit are to be avoided by its members as far as possible; the attitude of a worshipper should be the attitude of universal love although differences must exist, as a matter of fact, between one church and another. In a word, *toleration* is the best virtue which should be cultivated by every member of a church.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Moral Aberrations.

So long we have dealt with the positive elements of our moral life—the rights, duties and virtues. But the moral life has not merely a *positive* side ; it has also a *negative* side—a side that is constituted by the opposite elements as vice, sin, &c. At least in the beginning the moral life is more vicious and sinful than dutiful and virtuous. Throughout it is a great struggle between reason and sensibility—it is an uphill march ; its path is rough and thorny ; its progress is made through constant slips, i. e. through lapsing into vice and sin. Or in other words, the course of moral life is not straight ; there are frequent aberrations or deflections from it. We are now going to consider these aberrations.

I. **Moral Evil** :—At the outset we should carefully distinguish between *moral* and *physical* evil. The physical evil is what is caused by nature without or within us. The nature outside of us thwarts our needs and wishes in many ways. The unfertile soil, the unfavourable climate, the severe heat or cold, floods and droughts, storms, lightnings, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, &c. are the external natural agencies that stand in opposition to our needs and wishes, and are, therefore, positively injurious to us. The nature inside of us is no less injurious to us under some circum-

stances. The weaknesses and infirmities of body and soul, such as blindness, deafness, dumbness &c. and the bad inherited dispositions, are no less powerful impediments to our needs and wishes. The physical evils are the effects of these injurious natural agencies that "thwart our plans and purposes," or in any way impede our "needs and wishes." The physical evils are, therefore, *non-moral*, i. e. arise out of conditions, or are caused by agencies, which are *non-moral*. The injuries done by these agencies are not *intentional*, i. e. not preconceived by them; they cause them by the necessity of their nature, not *voluntarily*. These injuries are, therefore, non-moral or indifferent to morality just like the injuries done by the insane, the somnambulist or the delirious. There is another class of physical evil which is not strictly included in the preceding. The injurious effects caused by the *involuntary movements* of man are also physical evils, because they are performed by him as a physical being, i. e. without having preconceived ends for the realisation of which they are necessary. (See Bk. I, Chap. I, § 1—*Conduct*).

The *moral evils*, on the other hand, are the injurious effects produced by the *voluntary activities* of man. Thus, whilst the physical evils are *involuntary*, the moral evils are *voluntary*; the former are *natural*, whilst the latter are *human*. Whatever is, therefore, *morally wrong or bad*, is a moral evil. Hence all disrespects of the rights, all violations of the duties and all vices are moral evils.

We have found in the third chapter of this Book

that the essential condition of the consciousness of duty is the conflict between the higher and the lower selves, between reason and inclination. This conflict is the source of the moral evil also. When the higher self prevails and prompts us to act upon the principle suggested by it, we do our duty ; and the result is a moral good : where, on the contrary, the lower self prevails and prompts us to action, we fail to do our duty ; and the result is a moral evil. Thus, as long as such a conflict continues in our mind, and there remains the possibility of our lapsing into vice and sin, the moral evil is inevitable. Again, we can cultivate vices, as we can cultivate virtues. The vices or the bad habits of thoughts and actions, then, become more formidable impediments to the moral progress. The sporadic lapse into the bad is a far lesser menace to the moral life than the habits of vices. Furthermore, our moral life is not a merely unconnected series of sporadic acts and habits ; it is an organised whole in which the sporadic acts and habits are units ; it also undergoes a process of development and passes through distinct but correlated stages. This does not mean that the development is uninterrupted and continuous ; there are occasional hindrances—there are frequent backward movements. But inspite of all these the movement is, on the whole, forward, though the amount of progress may be, in some cases, very small, in some other, very great : each stage may be regarded as a universe in itself ; it is the moral sphere in which a man lives for a long or short period of time ; but so long as he lives in

it he views all moral facts from a particular standpoint. This standpoint may be narrow or broad ; but whatever it may be, it always falls short of the moral ideal ; however advanced is the actual state of our moral life, it always falls short of the ideal state. Hence there always remains the possibility of a conflict between the actual and the ideal, between the lower and the higher : it is the destiny of man to be in a state of war, in so far as he is human ; but in such a war lies his greatness. The life in which there is no such war is either the life of the brute, or of God. Such being the lot of man, the moral evil, in different degrees, is as much possible for him as the moral good. By this it is not, of course, meant that evil is sought as evil, as good is sought as good. As we have said elsewhere, (see Bk. II, p. 19 and also chap. IV, § II of this Book), man always seeks his own good. The reasons are obvious. The ultimate form of good is invariably *self-realisation* ; a man acts only to attain something which may satisfy him ; and what satisfies him is always considered by him as his good. Thus no man seeks moral evil *knowingly*. Yet it cannot be denied that man occasionally does wrong or seeks what is really a moral evil. This apparent inconsistency arises out of the fact that though a man's standpoint, at the time of action, is that of his own good, this standpoint may be narrow, selfish and therefore, inconsistent with the broader standpoint—the standpoint of the universal good : hence in so far as he judges his action from his own standpoint he thinks it good but when he himself or others judge it

from the broader standpoint it is thought bad: thus the same action may be good and bad at the same time when judged from two different standpoints. This shows that there is no action which is *absolutely* bad, or *absolutely* good. What we usually call bad actions are not absolutely bad; they are good, at least for the time being, to the doers in a certain sense. We call stealing, murder, cheating, forgery, lying, &c. bad; but are they entirely bad to the perpetrators? Do they not satisfy them at the time of their performance? The truth is, these actions are good to them in as far as they are performed to attain ends which satisfy them,—in as far as they are done from standpoints suggested by the “universes” within which their perpetrators live. Again, as Prof. Mackenzie has truly remarked: “Many of the acts that we regard as vices were at one time scarcely vices at all. They are the virtues of a lower stage of civilization, a lower universe which has been superseded, but in which some men still linger.” “Murder and lying and theft,” says Prof. Alexander, “are a *dam nosa hereditus* left us from a time when they were legitimate institutions: when it was honourable to kill all but members of the clan, or to lie without scruple to gain an end, and when there was promiscuity of property.” (Moral Order and Progress, p. 307). (See also Bk. I, pp. 145-50). But, yet, we call these actions bad, and we do so rightly, because the standpoints from which they are done are very narrow in comparison with the standpoint suggested by the idea of the supreme end of life; the

universes within which they fall are far lower than the universe of the Common Good: they satisfy the lower selves of the perpetrators, which suggest lower stand-points to them. Is it then possible to seek evil for its own sake? Milton's *Satan* and Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* are depicted to be such characters as seek evil as evil. But this is merely a poetical exaggeration rather than a stern truth. A man, without losing his rational nature altogether, cannot sink so low into the depth of immorality as may say "Evil, be thou my good." In extreme cases the moral nature of the evil-doers becomes more or less dormant, but may be roused up at a single animating call, as is the case with the converts.

But apart from the average men, even the best men among us sometimes show weakness of character. The reason is, the standpoint of no human being, however good he may be, is the best; defect in some form or other attaches itself to it, the consequence of which is that though in one direction their actions are excellent, in another direction they are defective. Or in other words, the universe in which they live is not a perfect system, a perfect organisation of all the elements it contains; so that the dominant interest is not one, but many, some of which are excellent, while others are low and narrow: it may be that the excellent ones guide their conduct in the great majority of cases, but yet in some instances they are guided by the narrow ones. Study the life of any great man, and you will find that it is an admixture of greatness and narrowness,



moral strength and moral weakness. Socrates was great in many respects, but a failure in his domestic life. Many eminent poets bore impeachable character ; many great reformers were unscrupulous in selecting means to their ends. Consequently, the moral judgment upon the character of a man should be based, not upon his shortcomings only, but also upon his achievements and efforts. The moral evils are thus shadows that will accompany human nature so long as it remains imperfect ; it is the destiny of man to lapse into them and struggle with them ; and only by gradually overcoming them he can achieve his salvation.

The moral evils may be viewed from two standpoints—from the standpoint of inner nature, or from that of outer deeds—from their inner side or their outer side. From the former they are called *vices* or flaws of character or bad habits of will ; from the latter they are called *sins* and *crimes* or bad acts. We shall now deal with vice, sin and crime separately.

II. **Vice** :—Vice is opposite of virtue. Therefore each vice corresponds to a virtue. Or in accordance with Aristotle, each virtue is the mean between two vices ; the extreme and the defective forms of each action are vices, whilst the moderate or intermediate form is a virtue. Thus, *foolhardiness* or *rashness* which is an excess, and *cowardice* which is a deficiency, both are vices, whereas *courage*, the mean or intermediate form of the two, is a virtue. Similarly, *prodigality* and *illiberality* are vices, whilst *liberality* is a virtue. We have distinguished vice from sin and crime. But

it should be remembered that the distinction is *not absolute*. The vices are inner habits, whilst sins and crimes are outer actions. But there is no absolute distinction between the inner habits and the outer acts; the latter are the external expressions of the former. The concrete act is a whole of which the inner habit and the overt act are mere constituents. Hence a vice separated from the overt act in which it issues is an *abstraction*; so is the overt act separated from the inner habit. Hence in considering the moral value of a concrete act we should take into account both the sides—both the inner habit and the overt act. But in fact the inner side is more *extensive* than the outer. In all instances the vicious tendencies do not issue in overt act. In many instances they fail to issue definitely in evil deeds on account of the obstruction offered by external circumstances or other causes, and therefore remain more or less concealed. And in some cases where they issue in deeds, the evil character of the actions may be changed into a good one by the action of external forces; the motive is bad, but the overt act may produce good consequences, as in the instance given by Dr. Johnson that if a man flings a shilling towards a beggar to hurt him, and if the beggar picks it up, buys victuals and thus saves his life from starvation, the action produces good consequences, but the motive of the man is bad. So that in evaluating the outer deeds we should look into the inner motives as much as into the external consequences. (For a fuller discussion of this point, see Bk. I, Chap. VI, pp. 106-

119). Again, the *ultimate* moral value of an act should be determined by considering whether the motive is the *highest*, i.e. has reference to the *Universal Good*. What we usually call good motives are only *relatively* good; there is only one *absolutely* good motive, and that is what has reference to the Supreme Good or Good of the universe. When an act is done from this motive, it is really and absolutely good. This is the meaning of the famous saying "Whatever is not of faith is sin."

Now another question presents itself to us: Are the vices, apart from actions, morally culpable, *i.e.* have they any *intrinsic* value for which alone they may be condemned? We have discussed this point elsewhere. (See Bk. I, Chap. VI, pp. 119-21). Here we shall consider only a remark of Prof. Mackenzie: "Such sayings as 'whoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already in his heart,' gave a new extension to the conception of morals." (Manual, p. 377). The sayings are true, if "looking" here indicates a *habitual* disposition, not a mere *passing* desire, *i.e.* if it is his *habit* to look in that way; otherwise the desire that expresses itself in the looking may be merely fugitive, leaving no evil trace behind in the character, and will be therefore morally indifferent. This is admitted by Prof. Mackenzie, as he says, "of course evil thoughts may also pass through a man's mind without getting the length even of intentions. In this case they are not morally culpable. Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book V.—

“ Evil into the mind of God or man  
 May come and go, so unapproved, and leave  
 No spot or blame behind.”

(Ibid, p. 380, *foot note*).

But the vices, as we have said, are bad habitual dispositions acquired through a series of voluntary actions ; and as they are *voluntarily acquired*, they must be morally culpable, quite apart from their issue in evil deeds, because we are morally *responsible* for them.

One other point which remains to be considered is the classification of the vices. But as each vice corresponds to a virtue, the classification of the vices will also correspond to the classification of the virtues. We have already classified the virtues in the fourth chapter of this Book, which will give the clue to the classification of the vices. It is therefore needless to enter into such a classification here.

**Review of theories** :—Before we leave the subject we should consider some peculiar theories with regard to its origin. Three theories deserve examination—the Christian theory of Original sin (sin is here used in the sense of vice), Kant’s theory of *radical sin*, and Plato’s theory of *vice as ignorance*.

(1) **The doctrine of original sin** :—This is a theological dogma which need not elaborately be considered here. It teaches that men are wicked and corrupt from their birth—men are born with only vicious dispositions. If the dogma means that men contain the possibility of being vicious in their nature inasmuch as it is imperfect, it is true ; but if the dogma means that the

human nature is predestined to be vicious, not to be good, then it is false, because it is not only inconsistent with experience, but also with the testimony of all science and philosophy: it is a dangerous doctrine which reduces man to be an incorrigible devil to whom only one course of action is open, viz. the vicious; but a devil, in this sense of the term, is not a moral being, for a moral being is conscious of both the good and the evil, and a being to whom only one course of action is possible, is either a beast or a god, i. e., a being who is either below or above the level of morality. Thus the doctrine abolishes the very moral nature of man.

(2) **The doctrine of radical sin** :—Kant also repudiates the doctrine of original sin on the ground that it makes sin *hereditary*; and “to make it the result of heredity is to confound it with disease.” Sin, according to Kant, is *personal*, i. e., the consequence of man’s liberty. “Sin is the voluntary preference of the love of self to the law of duty.” But this voluntary preference either to love the self or the law of duty took place at the moment when our will first exercised its freedom. We committed ourselves to the path of virtue or of vice in our cradle—we are sinners or saints from our birth. Hence sin is *innate* or *radical* because it came into being at our birth; yet it is *acquired*, not hereditary, because it was due to our free choice. But as it cannot be maintained, because contrary to experience, that man is absolutely good, Kant was obliged to hold “the Jansenist thesis that man is originally and naturally wicked.” If it is asked why can man not be good and evil at the

same time? his answer is : he cannot, because the free act by which he chooses good or evil is one, indivisible, absolute act : "he chooses at one time, and for his whole life, his moral destiny"; but as he cannot choose both good and evil at the same time, he must choose one ; and this must be evil, because if he chose good all the actions throughout his life would be good,—a fact which is contradicted by experience. The numerous bad actions which a man performs in his life clearly show that he did not choose good by the first absolute act of his free will ; he therefore chose evil. Thus man is originally and naturally wicked. Kant calls that doctrine *latitudinarianism* which maintains that man is at once good and evil, or that he is neither good nor evil ; and that doctrine *rigorism* which teaches that man is either absolutely good or absolutely evil.

**Criticism** :—(a) This doctrine denies the "comparative degree in the moral value of men and leads logically to the Stoical paradox that all faults are equal." If men are absolutely wicked, if there is nothing good in him,—it follows that all men are *equally* wicked and all evils are absolute. Hence all actions are *equally* bad, because they flow from exactly the same principle, viz., the love of the self. These inferences are undoubtedly absurd, because contrary to experience which declares that there are *better* and *worse* men, there are *better* and *worse* actions. For instance, a truthful man is better than a liar ; a philanthrope is better than a misanthrope ; murder is worse than striking or hurting ; earning of wealth by fair means is better than the same by unfair means, and so on.

(b) Another difficulty involved in the doctrine is that it fails to explain the possibility of *moral conversion*. If man chooses, in the cradle, by an absolute act of his free will, either the good or the evil and remains absolutely good or evil throughout his life, it is inconceivable that there can be any transition from the one state to the other. Moral conversion which means such transition is therefore, impossible, or at least is a mystery and a miracle. Indeed Kant denies that experience proves the possibility of any such conversion. He contends that no man can be entirely converted to good, because we find that even the most saintly of men has moral defects. Therefore, so long as the distinction between good and evil remains absolute, so long as no commingling of good and evil is possible, there is really no distinction between the saint and the sinner: in fact there is no saint, all are sinner. For these reasons, Kant did not hesitate to repeat that he was not sure whether any virtuous act was ever performed on the earth. This theory resembles the Stoic doctrine that no man is wise because no man is *perfectly* wise. But both fact and experience contradict this: we find that good co-exists with evil; no man, as we have found, is absolutely good or absolutely evil; man is therefore both good and evil at the same time.

(c) Kant was aware of this difficulty and tried to meet it. He observed that man's acts are all bad, because they are occurrences in time and therefore metaphysically imperfect. But conscience which is the principle of these acts is absolute and above time. God sees not

only our acts but also our conscience. Hence the real goodness of a man consists in the goodness of his conscience, not in the goodness of his acts. In the eyes of God that man is good whose conscience is good, even though his acts may be bad. This is equivalent to the admission that a man may be good in conscience and bad in actions, i. e. he may be good and bad at the same time. There are other difficulties involved in this explanation. According to Kant badness attaches only to actions, whilst goodness only to conscience. The kind of badness and goodness which he speaks of is *metaphysical*, because the former is due to metaphysical imperfection and the latter to metaphysical perfection. But our actions are not only metaphysically imperfect but may also be *morally* defective. For instance, an act of stealing is an event in time, and therefore metaphysically imperfect, but it is also morally bad. Likewise, the goodness of conscience is not merely metaphysical, but also moral, because if it were not so, it could not be the principle of moral actions. The conscience cannot be absolutely separated from acts and conversely. The acts are bad, because they, as events in time and space, do not completely represent the conscience. This is true. But this also shows that the acts are at least incomplete expressions of conscience. If conscience and acts are *absolutely* distinct, if the latter are not in any way expressions of the former, we cannot be held responsible for our actions. Again, it is not true that the conscience of man is absolute and perfect. The actual concrete conscience of man is an individualisa-



tion of the universal conscience, just as his actual concrete reason is an individualisation of the universal reason, and as such is imperfect. (For a fuller discussion of this point, see Bk. I, Chap. VI). This is corroborated by our common experience. Peoples differ considerably with regard to their moral judgments and also the exact meaning and scope of the moral laws. The conscience of the same man "wavers and oscillates more or less between good and evil." Besides, there is a practical danger attached to the theory that an absolutely good conscience may co-exist with absolutely bad acts, that we may be absolutely pure in heart though our actions may be morally defective. It defends those fanatics who believe that the purity of conscience will atone for the badness of acts.

(d) Now, if it is asked, if our actions do not indicate the purity of our conscience, how do we know that our conscience is pure and good at all? Kant, in reply, tells us that it will be the sufficient indication of the purity of conscience if we know that we are *making progress in good*. The absolute good is our ideal which we cannot expect to know and reach; our actual state is only a step in the progress towards it; and it is sufficient for us if we are conscious of such progress. All these are true so far as they go. But, as progress implies a transition from the lower to the higher, from a less good to a more good, Kant unconsciously comes round to our own theory that a man can be good and bad at the same time, that good may co-exist with evil, that good and bad are *relative* terms, they are correlative.

(e) Kant supposes that our will is fully-developed even from our birth, i. e. is capable of consciously and freely selecting a life of action even at our birth. But this is contrary to the teachings of modern psychology. Our will passes through several impulsive and semi-impulsive stages before it comes to a stage called volition in which only it consciously preconceives an end and then realises it freely by an overt act. (See Bk. I, pp. 50-61).

(f) Granting that the will is fully-developed from our birth, what relation our conscience bears to the one, indivisible, absolute first act by which the will made us radically evil? What is the relation between the will and conscience? Kant is far from being explicit on this point. Evidently the indivisible, absolute act was bad, because it was nothing but a choice of the bad; and the will, as the absolute determinant of such a choice was also bad. But as the will could also choose the good, it was also good; or in other words, the will was, in fact, both good and bad—it was *relatively* good. But conscience, according to Kant, is absolutely unerring, absolutely good. The will and conscience are therefore absolutely distinct, and must be two independent faculties of the self. This is another psychological blunder called "*faculty-hypothesis*" in psychology, which divides the self into distinct and independent faculties, and thus makes it only a mechanical aggregate of them. (See Bk. I, pp. 122-23). Again, if the relation between the will and conscience be external, the relation between the absolute act and conscience must also be external: that is to say, conscience was not the real spring of the

act, but simply declared it to be bad. This view resembles the common intuitional view that all voluntary acts spring from the will, and the function of conscience is simply to declare the goodness or badness of them. Kant's view, then, has all the defects that belong to the intuitional theory.

(3) **The theory of vice as ignorance:—**(For the statement and criticism of this theory see the fourth chapter of this Book, § III.).

III. **Sin:—**A sin, as we have said before, is a bad outer deed, whilst vice is an inner disposition or habit. Therefore, from the moral point of view both are equally important and essential. We have also found that a vice, as a merely passing bad intention, is not more morally culpable than a virtue, as a merely passing good intention, is morally laudable. Both are morally indifferent. Similarly an outer deed, whose spring is not an active intention, or vice, or virtue, is morally neutral. For these reasons *an outer deed is a sin when it is issued from a sporadic bad act of the will, or by a bad habit of the will*; otherwise it is an impulsive act which is morally neutral, although productive of bad consequences. No doubt we ordinarily judge the moral value of actions by reference to their external consequences: this is because either that it is not always easy to read the real intention of the agent, or that we fail to understand the real significance of the morality of actions. Whatever the cause may be, from the moral point of view it is a serious mistake to estimate the morality of actions by their external consequences only. (See Bk. I, chap. VI).

IV. **Crime**:—Crime is narrower than sin : sin, as we have found, indicates all kinds of moral misdeeds ; but crime signifies those misdeeds which go against the established laws of a country ; it includes the offences which are recognised and enforced at law, and are, therefore liable to be followed by punishment. Thus, if sin be regarded as a generic term, crime will be a specific term. It is not convenient, or even possible to bring all moral offences under the perview of the law. For example, prodigality is a moral offence ; but, yet, it is not possible to punish the offender legally, because it is not always possible to exactly determine what constitutes this offence under certain circumstances. Similarly, ingratitude is a moral offence ; but we cannot always ascertain the specific nature of the offences coming under it. For these reasons the law recognises only those moral offences which are definite, and directly and seriously affect the well-being of society. Again, a highly-developed conscience recognises moral offences which are so subtle that they are not ordinarily recognised as offences at all. Furthermore, there are moral offences whose evil consequences fall upon the offenders themselves without affecting the general well-being. In such instances it is not necessary to formulate any law for their prevention.

V. **Reward and Punishment**:—There are two opposing human activities that bring on two opposite consequences upon the agent. All good deeds bring on reward, while all bad deeds bring on punishments, in some form or other. Men are naturally prone to reward those who perform their duties respect,

other's rights or do virtuous acts ; and to punish those who do the opposite. When they see that the virtuous are punished, or not rewarded, and the vicious are rewarded, or not punished, they still believe that in the long run, here or hereafter, the former will get recompense and the latter will be crushed. This natural belief is based upon a higher natural belief that the ultimate constitution of the world is moral, and that, therefore, the necessary consequences of the virtuous deeds are reward and those of the vicious deeds are punishment. Thus the rational basis of reward and punishment is the sense of justice which demands that men must bear the consequences of their deeds. Again, as every good deed is beneficial to individuals, they naturally feel gratitude to and reverence for, the doer, while, as every evil deed is harmful to them, they naturally feel revenge against the perpetrator. These feelings are the *natural* origin of reward and punishment. Furthermore, the justification of punishment may be shown in another way. The ultimate object of society and therefore of every member of it is the maintenance of the moral ideal. The moral ideal may be maintained in two ways—by *education* and by *punishment*. Both of these are forms of moral discipline, but their operations are different. Education maintains the moral ideal by developing the moral life of individuals and thus raising them gradually to higher moral universe, whereas punishment preserves it by enforcing it against the resistance of the wrong-doer, by vindicating the majesty of the law against him. Thus, "punishment as a moral institution is the condemnation

of wrong-doing, which either is effected by simple moral censure, or, in cases where it is found necessary, is enforced by legal penalties.....But punishment is as natural a result of wrong-doing as a cold is of sitting in wet shoes. It is the reaction of the good forces of society against the evil. Accordingly, it is something which grows and exists with morality itself, and is a necessary incident of the predominance of the ideal." (Prof. Alexander, *Moral Order and Progress*, pp. 324-25).

But, though the institution of reward and punishment takes its origin from these natural feelings these feelings themselves change their character as moralisation increases. In primitive societies gratitude and revenge were the sole origin of reward and punishment; and even in civilized societies the peoples belonging to the lower strata are scarcely prompted by any higher feelings than these in their distribution of reward and punishment. But with the development of moral consciousness these egoistic feelings are gradually dropped out and the distribution of reward and punishment is based, mainly, upon the considerations of common good or evil, although the egoistic elements are not entirely absent. But gratitude being a virtue it still retains its influence; while revenge being positively vicious, it totally disappears, or at least is considerably weakened. As Prof. Mackenzie has remarked: "As the moral consciousness develops, this feeling of personal resentment becomes less keen. Men begin to learn that their merely personal wrongs are not of infinite importance; and under certain

circumstances forgiveness becomes possible. They see that a wrong-doer to them is not necessarily a wrong-doer to humanity, and it is only this last that is of moment." But the attitude of society will always remain the same. Its sense of injury will not be weakened and will continue to be the sole motive of punishment; because a wrong done to an individual as an integral member of society, and the latter being the representative of humanity, it is ultimately a wrong done to humanity: the vindication of the majesty of the law is the vindication of the rights of humanity. Forgiveness is here out of the question; the supremacy of the law must be vindicated; the wrong-doer must be punished; and the wrongness and the nullity of wrong-doing must be clearly shown. This is, as we have said, the rational justification of punishment. But we shall show in the sequel that punishment has other aspects beside mere retribution.

We have found above that reward and punishment come into existence along with morality, but they are not identical with morality. Morality is the logical prius of these institutions. But the utilitarian writers reverse this order and suppose that the institutions of reward and punishment precede morality, not *vice versa*. Their famous doctrine of the "sanctions of morality" was invented to explain the origin and development of morality. According to them "morality is conformity to a law to which penalties are attached by the law-giver, whether that law-giver is society or the law of the land, or God." Thus with them, the hope of reward and the fear of punishment through

which the law operates are the only motives of moral actions; and reward and punishment are the essential marks by which morality and immorality of actions should be judged; if you want to know whether an action is good or bad, find out whether reward or penalty attaches to it. So far as the development of morality is concerned this doctrine contains some truth; but as an explanation of the origin and justification of morality it is a hopeless failure. For a fuller account and criticism of this theory, see Bk. I, pp. 150-61; and Bk. II, pp. 58-61, and 65-69.

**VI. The Theories of Punishment:**—The object of punishment may be viewed from three different standpoints. These standpoints give rise to three distinct theories of punishment. The first is called *retributive* or *retaliatory*, the second *preventive* or *deterrent* and the third *educative* or *reformative*.

(1) **The retributive theory:**—This is the original form of the theory of punishment. Among the primitive peoples whose moral consciousness was little developed and consequently whose actions were more or less prompted by feelings and impulses, revenge for injury done was the only object of punishment. It was thought that the evil deed must return upon the doer himself, the evil consequences of his action must be shared by him also. Even in civilized societies those peoples whose moral consciousness has not sufficiently developed private revenge is the only motive which actuates them to punish the wrongdoer. This is the crude form of the theory of retribu-



tion ; but there is a higher form of it which we shall consider later on.

In this form, the theory is not an ethical theory of punishment, in as much as private revenge or vindictiveness is positively immoral, and an act prompted by it is likewise immoral. The justification of punishment is founded on the fact that the wrongdoing is a violation of right ; but a right is possible only in a society without whose recognition and enforcement it cannot exist. (See chap. II of this Book). The state of things in which peoples are actuated by only private vengeance to punish the wrong doer, not by any sense of justice which demands the rectification of the violation of all right, is not, strictly speaking, a state of society in which rights have been established by general recognition and legal enforcement. As Prof. Green has truly observed : " Private vengeance belongs to the state of things in which rights are not yet actualised ; in the sense that the powers which it is for the social good that a man should be allowed to exercise, are not, yet secured to him by society. In proportion as they are actualised, the exercise of private vengeance must cease. A right of private vengeance is an impossibility ; for, just so far as the vengeance is private, the individual in executing it is exerting a power not derived from society nor regulated by reference to social good, and such a power is not a right." Thus, "in a state of things in which private vengeance for hurt inflicted was the universal practice, there could be no rights at all." (Works, vol. II, pp. 487-88). Therefore, the well-constituted state of society in which rights

exist being entirely different from the state of things in which rights do not exist, vengeance as the only object of punishment has been gradually superseded and replaced by other humanitarian considerations.

(2). **The preventive theory** :—According to this theory the object of punishment is to prevent or deter other peoples from committing similar offences. It teaches that a man is punished, not because he has committed a wrong, but because others may not commit a similar wrong in future. This is, no doubt, a crude form of the theory and its main defects are, (a) that it justifies punishment of one man simply for the benefit of others ; (b) that, therefore, it regards him only as a *thing* which exists for others, not as a person who exists for himself, not as an end in himself. It is certainly unjust that one man should suffer pain, not so much for his own benefit as for the benefit which others will obtain by desisting from committing similar offences out of fear of punishment. Again, the supposition that one man may be made subservient to the interests of others is based on that erroneous view of man which treats him as a mere irrational object that may be used by others as they like, not as a rational being who may be used as a means to the end of others only when the end is also the end of his own moral life.

In its more rational form the theory teaches that the object of punishment is not merely the prevention of others but also that of the wrong-doer himself. As Dr. Paulsen remarks : "The ground is to be sought in the effect,.....punishment is an evil which is inflicted upon the criminal by the authorities of the state *in*

*order that crime may not be committed in future*” by himself and others. Prof. Alexander interprets the theory in a similar way : he observes : “If we take the juridical view, its object is to deter the criminal himself and others. This arises from the very nature of legal administrations, which requires only that an act should be done, and does not ask whether it is done for its own sake or from some other motive. All that the law can do, therefore, is to affix some penalty which shall secure the non-violation of the law. Accordingly, the legislator, in estimating the amount of punishment required to enforce a new law, asks how much is needed to prevent the performance of the wrong act. Thus in all punishments prevention is implied as one of its objects. . . .” The main defect of this theory is that as law does not take into consideration the motive or inner character of the wrong-doers, in those instances in which they are good, punishment is not morally justified. Thus, as Prof. Alexander observes, “it is not as moral that punishment is preventive, but only as the means of securing the performance of right action, irrespective of the character of the agent. Legal punishment is preventive and nothing more ; . . . . .” We may, therefore conclude that the preventive theory in both of these forms is not an ethical theory at all.

(3) **The reformatory theory** :—According to this theory the true object of punishment is to educate, reform, or cure the wrong-doer himself. This view is generally accepted in modern times and accords best with the humanitarian tendency of the age. It has been defended in two ways : (a) The criminologists try

to found their science upon "the theory that crime is a pathological phenomenon, a form of insanity, an inherited or acquired degeneracy;" They argue that the proper treatment of the criminal should therefore consist in his education, reformation or cure, not in his punishment at all; hospitals, asylums and reformatories should therefore be substituted for prisons. The essential basis of this theory, as Prof James Seth points out, is "that the criminal is born, not made, or, rather, that he is *more* born than made. Crime seems to be almost as instinctive in some natures as goodness is in others. This instinctive tendency to evil, developed by favourable circumstances or environment, results in the criminal act and in the life of crime. There is a criminal class, a kind of caste, which propagates itself. Crime is a profession, with a code of honour and an etiquette of its own; almost a vocation, calling for a special aptitude, moral and intellectual. Have we not here a great pathological phenomenon, a disease to be cured, not punished?" (Principles, pp. 314-15).

The main defects of this theory are these: in the first place, it confounds two widely distinct facts; from the fact that some criminals are born it concludes that all criminals are born. It is true that there are men who are born criminal, but it is false that all who commit crimes are *born* criminal. The truth is, the distinction between the virtuous and the vicious is not absolute. No man is absolutely virtuous or absolutely vicious. Human nature is always a mixture of virtue and vice; but the proportion in which they mix is not always and everywhere the same. We call a man

virtuous in whom the virtuous tendencies preponderate over the vicious : and a man vicious in whom the latter preponderate over the former. Similarly, we call a man born criminal or born virtuous in whom the vicious or the virtuous tendencies considerably prevail even from childhood. But it is impossible to think that a man may be born absolutely criminal or virtuous unless we can think that he may be born a brute or a god. So long as a man should be called man, i. e. *rational animal* it is impossible to conceive of him as entirely lost in vice, or as entirely elevated over it. The science of criminology is based on the erroneous supposition that the human nature may be entirely effaced, a man may lose his birth-right as a *rational* being, i. e. a man may entirely lose his personality and become an *animal* or *thing* only. But it fails to notice the fact that even the so-called born criminals are *rational* beings and that, as such, they are not entirely devoid of all virtuous tendencies, though they may be scanty and very feeble. The instances of conversions of such criminal are not altogether absent in the history of criminal life ; and they are positive refutation of this doctrine.

In the second place, if it is held that men are born vicious or virtuous, the very foundation of morality is undermined. All human actions vicious or virtuous are, then, instinctive and therefore, *non-moral* ; the responsibility of a man for his actions becomes, thus, a chimera ; right and wrong, merit and demerit, reward and punishment, all are, then, meaningless ; man is reduced to an animal, "ought-to-be" to "is" or "mus" ; in a word, morality itself is reduced to an illusion.

In the third place, the strongest refutation of this doctrine is the consciousness of the criminal himself. No criminal will excuse himself on the ground that he is an insane or a brute. Most of them would rather resent the treatment of them as such, and would not "submit to be treated as a patient or a case." The reasons are obvious. Every man, however criminal he is, is a person, not a mere individual or animal; he would not, therefore, consent to give up the right of controlling himself and to transfer it entirely to others or to society, so as to be treated merely as a patient. "The appeal, in all attempts at reformation," observes Prof. James Seth, "must be to the man himself; his sanction must be obtained, and his co-operation secured, before reformation can begin. He is not an automaton, to be regulated from without. The State cannot annex the individual; be he criminal or saint, his life is his own, and its springs are deep within. It is a truism, but it has to be repeated in the present connection, that all moral control is ultimately self-control." (Principles, p. 316).

(b) Some writers as those who apply the principle of Natural Selection to morals, attempt to defend this theory of reformation in another way. They argue that the progress of morality resembles the progress of the animal species. The latter consists in preserving the fit and in extirpating the weak or the offending individuals; while the former consists in preserving the dominant or general ideal and in extirpating the ideals offending it. (See Bk. II, pp. 130-33). Therefore the true object of punishment should be to extinguish the

false ideal and thus to make possible the predominance of the true ideal. And in morality this is possible only by educating and reforming the wrong-doer. As Prof. Alexander puts it: "It seeks to put new sentiments in place of the old, driving the bad ideal out of the wrong-doer's mind by bringing home to him the right. So far as it operates not only on the wrong-doer himself but on others, its object is once more to make them better by bringing home to their minds the wrongfulness of evil-doing." Again, "in the perpetual struggle between good and evil, punishment is thus a contrivance to win over the bad to the side of the good. Though it means indignation against wrong, it means care for the welfare of actual or possible wrong-doers." (*Moral Order and Progress*, pp. 331-32).

It cannot be denied that this theory contains some truths; a struggle goes on in the moral life of every man between the lower and the higher ideals, and the moral education and reformation consist in subordinating the former to the latter. They are thus one of the primary objects of punishment. But it is a mistake to suppose that they are the only object of punishment. As we shall see in the sequel, there are other objects of punishment which are not less important. This theory is, therefore, incomplete and one-sided, and fails to explain the justifiability of capital punishment even in exceptional circumstances, and makes many other kinds of punishment quite ineffective. (See chap. II of this Book, pp. 36-38). If education and reformation are the only object of punishment, under no circumstances the wrong-doer should be put to death

inasmuch as they are possible only as long as he lives : again, in many instances kind treatment is more effective for the purpose of education and reformation than any harsh and painful treatment. The more serious defect of the theory arises from its attempt to base itself on an analogy between the struggle for existence as found in the physical nature and that as found in our moral nature. The analogy is superficial ; and even if found accurate, it explains, at most, only the origin and development of the moral ideas, but not the moral justification of them ; it explains the "what," not the "why" of them. (See Bk. II, pp. 135-38).

Besides the above theories there are other theories of punishment. For example, some maintain that the true object of punishment is to get rid of the wrongdoer himself so as to prevent him from doing further mischief. But this theory is evidently a particular form of the preventive theory, and fails to account for the justifiability of many other forms of punishment than imprisonment, capital punishment, &c.

**The true theory of punishment:**—We have found that the theories of punishment as described above have failed to suggest and explain the true object of punishment. But, yet, it cannot be denied that each of them contains some truth, when rightly understood. A man incurs punishment when he violates those rights and duties which are enforced at law, i. e. when he violates the laws of the State, which are nothing but commandments for the preservation and non-violation of those rights and duties. The rights and duties are, as we have seen, the essential means to the attainment



of the supreme good of life, which is *personal*, i. e. individual and social at the same time. By violating the laws of the State he hinders the attainment of the good which is the good for himself, for others and for the State as a whole; his offence affects, thus, not only the well-being of others and the State, but also that of himself as an integral part of the whole. Hence every offence is an offence against himself, others and the State. In as far as it is an offence against others and their representative, the State, the State *must react* upon him in the shape of punishment in order to show that the majesty of the law must be vindicated, that its nullity is impossible, that even if it is violated, it still remains supreme and absolutely imperative. \* *Indignation* or *resentment* is the natural cause of such reaction. Private vengeance is, of course, out of the question, because, firstly, it is impossible for the State, secondly, it cannot be the basis of any ethical theory of punishment; but indignation is different from private vengeance, it is a feeling excited by an offence against what is right, just or equitable—it is righteous anger. And this feeling of indignation leads the indignant to react upon the offender, and is, thus, the primary spring of punishment. Here we find the naturalness and justification of *retribution*. That punishment is retributive may be shown from other considerations also. If in a society the perpetrators of wrongs are allowed to escape scotfree, the laws will lose their absolutely imperative character; they will be no better than mere recommendations or injunctions which may be conveniently violated without incurring any evil consequence: all these

mean that members of that society will not be bound to act in obedience to its laws and that the society itself will, thus, lose its organised character and become a mere incoherent aggregate of individuals acting as they like ; a society like this will be inherently *self-contradictory* and will act in contradiction to the natural impulse of indignation upon which punishment is really based. From these it follows that the laws, as absolute imperatives, must contain within themselves the power of preventing any violation of their commands, or in some way vindicating their authority when it is set at naught. This implies that some sort of punishment must entail upon their violation ; and this seems to be the primary object of punishment.

But true retribution includes prevention and reformation. Retribution or retaliation, as an act, produces effects external and internal upon the offender and others : every act of the whole affects not only a particular part but all the parts, directly or indirectly. The external effect of retribution is prevention ; it prevents the offender and others from doing similar acts in future, by exciting fear of evil consequences in them. Though fear is a powerful deterrent, it is not the true deterrent : in the beginning of a criminal life fear may act as a powerful preventive, but when that life is sufficiently consolidated, fear ceases to be of any avail ; but in all instances it produces superficial results ; it touches only the surface of character ; it cannot radically cure its defects : though checked for a time the evil tendency reappears when opportunity arises. This is true not only of the offender himself, but also of others. The

real prevention comes from reformation, which is the internal effect of retribution. Retribution makes the criminal understand that the laws are majestic, absolutely imperative, incapable of being set at naught, so that the punishment is *righteous* and *just*, i.e., he deserves it. But this understanding of the righteousness of punishment may be effected only, through education and reformation. If he is made to see that his ideal is selfish and low, that the good to attain which he has acted is the selfish and false good, and that his true good is the universal good, so that his selfish ideal and selfish good must give way or be subordinated to the higher ideal and the universal good, then and then only his character will be reformed, his lower inclinations will yield to his reason, his slumbering conscience will be awakened, making further criminal act gradually impossible. In the eloquent words of Prof. James Seth we may then say: "the deepest warrant for the effectiveness of punishment as a deterrent and reformation comes only with the acceptance of the punishment, by mind and heart, as the inevitable fruit of the act. For punishment thus becomes a kind of revelation to the man of the true significance of his character and life. A man may thus be shocked into a better life. For accidental calamity, or for suffering which he has not brought upon himself, a man does not condemn himself. Such self-condemnation comes only with insight into the retributive nature of the calamity. It is just this element of justice that convert calamity or misfortune into punishment. The judgment of society upon the man must become the judgment of the man upon

himself, if it is to be effective as an agent in his reformation. This private re-enactment of the social judgment comes with the perception of its justice or desert." (Principles, pp. 316-17). Thus we find that the total idea of punishment contains many elements inseparably united. Those various elements may be summed up into the single word "*discipline*" which means that "the end of punishment is to bring home to a man such a sense of guilt as shall work in him a deep repentance for the evil past, and a new obedience for the time to come." (Ibid, p. 317).

**Capital punishment** :—Here an important question suggests itself: Is capital punishment justifiable? (a) The retributive theory in its original and crude form justifies such punishment on the ground that the evil consequences of a criminal act must return upon the perpetrator of the act—the destruction of the life of a man must be retaliated by the destruction of the life of the offender. This view is evidently ethically unsupportable; retribution or retaliation based on private vengeance is an immoral action. (See above §1). Even some of those writers, who uphold the retributive theory in its higher form, i.e. who regard punishment as the result of recoil of our sense of justice against the offender, justify capital punishment. Prof. Mackenzie may be placed under this head. For the statement and criticism of his theory see, above, chap. II, pp. 37-38.

(b) The preventive theory in its more rational form defend capital punishment on the ground that murder, high treason, &c. being the most heinous crime can be prevented only by imposing upon the offender the ex-

trement form of punishment, viz., his death, which will not only prevent him from doing similar act but also others from acting similarly in future by striking terror in their minds. But it may be replied that it is not morally justifiable to kill a man simply for the benefit of others ; and even to kill him in order to prevent him from repeating the crime is not also justified by deeper considerations. For a full discussion of this point see, above, chap. II, pp. 37-38.

(c) The reformatory theory does not justify capital punishment for the obvious reasons that reformation presupposes the preservation of the life to be reformed ; we cannot reform a life by destroying it. But, yet, such a staunch advocate of the reformatory theory as Prof. Alexander defends capital punishment : He remarks : "In some cases the wrong-doer's mind is so perverted that only loss of his life (at least in the judgment of society) will suffice. Here, too, paradoxical as it may seem, though perhaps the chief object of our punishment is the indirect one of bettering others, we punish with death in order to make him a good man and to bring him within the ideal of society. It is true that we give him no chance of showing his reformation by a further usefulness, but the penalty of death is thought necessary to bring home to him the enormity of his guilt." (*Moral Order and Progress*, p. 331).<sup>\*</sup> This argument has two parts : (i) in the first part he justifies capital punishment on the ground that in the judgment of society the nature of the wrong-doer is so perverted that it should be put to an end. But the question is why does society make such judgment at all ? If society makes such

judgment because the wrong-doer's mind is so perverted that it has been found to be beyond any education and reformation inspite of repeated attempts, then it is justified in making such judgment. But, if, on the other hand, instead of making any attempt at reformation it condemns him to death simply because he has committed a heinous crime, the object of punishment is evidently something else than reformation. (ii) In the second part, he justifies capital punishment on the ground that wrong-doer's death is the only means of bringing home to him the enormity of his crime. But the question is, why is it *thought necessary* that his death is the *only* means? Why instead of attempting to make him see the enormity of his crime by education does society condemn him to death? Is not this inconsistent with the theory of reformation? Prof. Alexander indirectly admits the paradoxical character of his argument.

(d) The true theory of punishment as described above according to which the true object of punishment is "*discipline*" emphatically condemns the institution of capital punishment, because discipline presupposes something to be disciplined, and this something cannot be the death, but must be the life of the wrong-doer. Hence preservation, education and correction, not destruction, are the proper objects of punishment whatever may be the nature of the offence. For a full discussion of this point see, above, Chap. II, pp. 37-80. Thus we find that from whatever point of view we consider capital punishment we can, by no means, morally justify it, except, perhaps, in some extreme cases in which the

character of the offender is so perverted that all attempts at correction have failed and that therefore his permanent removal by death is most urgently needed for the safety and well-being of society, understanding by society not an accidental aggregate of individuals but a living organism whose interest as well as the interest of its members it is to preserve the rights. Prof. T. H. Green mentions two conditions under which capital punishment is justifiable. He says: "Punishment either by death or by perpetual imprisonment is justifiable only on one of two grounds; either that association of the extremest terror with certain actions is under certain conditions necessary to preserve the possibility of a social life based on the observance of rights, or that the crime punished affords a presumption of a permanent incapacity for rights on the part of the criminal." "The first justification may," he continues, "be pleaded for the execution of men concerned in treasonable outbreaks, or guilty of certain breaches of discipline in war (on the supposition that the war is necessary for the safety of the state and that such punishments are a necessary incident of war). Whether the capital punishment is really just in such cases must depend, not only on its necessity as an incident in the defence of a certain state, but on the question whether that state itself is fulfilling its function as a sustainer of true rights. For the penalty of death for murder both justifications may be urged. It cannot be defended on any other ground, but it may be doubted whether the presumption of permanent incapacity for rights is one which in our ignorance we can ever be entitled

to make. As to the other plea, the question is whether, with a proper police system and sufficient certainty of detection and conviction, the association of this extremest terror with the murderer is necessary to the security of life." (Works, Vol. II, pp. 509-10). This view is exactly the same as we have held here and elsewhere. (See, above, Chap. II, pp. 36-38).

**VII. Obligation and Responsibility :—**The subjects of reward and punishment are closely connected with *responsibility*, because a man is rewardable or punishable for his actions in as far as he is responsible for them ; we are not morally justified in rewarding or punishing him for actions for which we cannot hold him answerable. Rewardableness and punishableness thus depend upon responsibility. But responsibility is connected with moral obligation ; a man is responsible for his actions in so far as he is under moral obligation to perform or to avoid performing them. For instance, if a man steals another's property, he is held responsible for his action of stealing ; but he is held responsible because he is under moral obligation *not* to steal ; if it were not his duty not to steal he could steal without being answerable for stealing : similarly, a man is *morally* rewardable for saving another's life in so far as he is under moral obligation to do so. Reward, punishment, obligation and responsibility are, thus, closely connected. We should therefore determine the precise meaning of the term "responsibility" before we proceed to consider the extent to which a man should be held responsible for his actions when he is regarded rewardable or punishable.



We have found that obligation and responsibility are two closely allied terms, but, yet, they are distinct. Some writers think that they represent the positive and the negative side, respectively, of the moral relation in which a man stands to the moral order. Moral obligation is the necessity of performing an action which conduces to the good of the moral order, while responsibility is the knowledge that the failure to perform it, or the performance of its opposite shall rightly entail punishment. "When I think of conduct as required of me," says Prof. Alexander, "I think of it as my duty; when I think of it as conduct which if I do not perform I shall be rightly punished, I have the sense of responsibility." And also, "the sense of responsibility is therefore, I think, rightly described by Mill as the knowledge that if we do wrong we shall deserve punishment, or, as I prefer to say, the knowledge that the *law* requires such and such conduct, and punishment therefore falls upon us if we transgress." (Moral Order and Progress, p. 334). But this is not the complete meaning of responsibility. Responsibility has not only a negative but also a positive side. As Prof. Dewey observes: responsibility has "a relatively superficial and negative meaning and a relatively positive, central meaning. In its external aspect, responsibility is *liability*. Each community and organisation informs its members what it regards as obnoxious, and serves notice upon them that they have to answer if they offend. The individual then is (1) likely or liable to have to explain and justify his behavior, and is (2) liable or open to suffering consequent

upon inability to make his explanation acceptable." (Ethics, p. 436). The *positive* responsibility is the apprehensiveness or susceptibility to the rights of others, generated by habitually recognizing "the justice of the community interest in his performances" and "the value to him of the instruction contained in its assertions of its interests." This positive aspect is "the essence of responsibility, which in turn is the sole *ultimate* guarantee of social order." Again, as we have found, we are responsible not only for our bad actions but also for our good actions ; we know not only that we shall be punished for the former but also that we shall be rewarded for the latter, although reward is not usually a legal, but at least a moral institution.

The feeling of responsibility, as we have seen and as Prof. Alexander admits, is not "the mere knowledge that I shall be punished" if I violate a right, but implies "the recognition of certain conduct as right," *i.e.* as obligatory. Thus obligation and responsibility are inseparable. Responsibility, in its complete sense, is therefore the habitual recognition of one's acts as right or wrong, and the knowledge that he is under moral obligation to do the right and to avoid the wrong, and that if he does so he shall deserve reward and if he fails to do so or does the opposite he shall deserve punishment. Responsibility presupposes two things : "First, that a man is capable of being influenced by what is right, that he can feel the force of goodness ; second, that whatever he does is determined by his character," or in short he has the *capacity of moral distinction* and also the *freedom of will*.

The first is obvious : if a man is absolutely devoid of the moral capacity either permanently or temporarily, he is reduced to be a mere animal and lives outside the pale of morality. We are not therefore morally justified either in rewarding or in punishing him for his actions. We can encourage him by reward, or terrorise him by punishment ; such actions may, sometimes, be expedient but not moral. Reward and punishment presuppose as their essential conditions that the man to be rewarded or punished is conscious of moral distinction—understands the rightness or wrongness of his actions ; when he loses such consciousness permanently as in the case of a born or temporary lunatic, he loses the prerogative of a man as man and becomes an irrational animal in human form. As Prof. Alexander observes : “we punish a man because he is acted upon by all the institutions of the society in which he lives, and is capable of feeling moral distinctions : that is, he has the capacity of being determined to action by the recognition of laws as constituting social good, and of choice between such laws and his lower impulses. The object of punishment is to make this mere capacity something actual, so that upon occasion he will choose the right. Every man acts according to his nature, but in doing so he comes into collision with the forces which require goodness, and is responsible in so far as he fails appreciating them.” (*Moral Order and Progress*, pp. 335-36).

The second condition of responsibility is no less obvious. A man is responsible in as far as he is free. The freedom of action is implied by the capacity of

moral distinction ; we are moral in so far as we are free ; our actions are right or wrong in as far as they are *our own* actions, *i. e.*, they are *voluntary* : we cannot be held morally responsible for actions which are not our own, which we have not voluntarily performed, which are not the issue of our volition, or expression of our character. For a full discussion of this point, see Bk. II, Chap. X. Thus we find that moral consciousness and freedom of the will are the two essential conditions which make responsibility possible. Where either of them is absent responsibility disappears. We are now going to consider the extent to which a man should be held responsible for his actions under different circumstances.

The criminologists who hold that men are born virtuous or vicious make responsibility an illusion, because human actions are not, then, voluntary but are prompted by blind instincts called virtuous or vicious. A man born with vicious tendencies *must* act viciously and a man born with virtuous tendencies *must* act virtuously ; neither of them is free in his action ; in the strict sense the action is *not his*, so that he should not be held responsible for his action. This is the ground on which they base their theory that the criminals should not be punished but should be treated as patients. This is evidently the theory which is founded upon the determinist view of human nature, denying the freedom of the will, and even the capacity of moral distinction. (For further criticism see above, § 3). Insanity, delirium, hysteria, somnambulism, &c., are conditions under which a man should be exonerated from the liability of punishment, in as much as under them he is no longer

the master of himself and performs actions which are not strictly his own. Even when a man is fully sane or in a normal condition he cannot, always, be held wholly responsible for his actions. Actions done under ignorance are not morally culpable, unless the ignorance itself is so, *i. e.*, unless he wilfully or negligently keeps himself in ignorance. Again, any condition which completely alienates a man from himself such, for instance, as drunkenness, exonerates him from responsibility, unless, of course, he is blameable for creating the conditions he is in. The automatic, random, reflex and instinctive actions, as well as actions performed under external compulsion, are involuntary and therefore non-moral; a man who performs them cannot be held responsible for them. But, still, he is held responsible for those habits of acting impulsively which he has voluntarily acquired. In brief, whatever conditions take away from a man his moral capacity and liberty exonerate him from responsibility.

VIII. **Remorse** :—When punishment makes the offender see the evil character of his deed, he feels the pain of conscience. Conscience, as we have seen (see Bk. I, Chap. VII, pp. 161-64), is the higher or rational self; and the pain of conscience is, therefore, the result of inconsistency that exists between it and the lower or passionate self—between his action as determined by the latter and his ideals as suggested by the former. So that the intensity of the pain is proportioned to the degree of such inconsistency, not to the enormity of his crime. But only in a healthy moral life a sense of such discrepancy is possible. The “hardened sinner”

who habitually lives in a low moral universe as suggested and determined by his lower self, whose actions are always prompted by his inclinations, does not feel such pain, because his actions are perfectly consistent with his ideals. But, as no man is absolutely vicious, absolutely irrational, his conscience, though it is very feeble, asserts itself in rare moments, tormenting the sinner with its pang. On the contrary in a healthy moral man who usually lives in a higher moral universe as determined by his higher or rational self and as generally determining his actions, a wrong action is not only followed by the pain of conscience, but also, if it is considerably serious, "by a recurrent and persistent sense of having fallen from one's proper level". This recurring feeling of degradation and fall is called *Remorse*. As Prof. Mackenzie describes it: "in its deepest form, it is not merely a grief for particular acts but a sense of degradation in one's whole moral character—a sense that one has offended against the highest law, and that one's whole nature is in need of regeneration".

**IX. Reformation :—**Remorse naturally leads to reformation of character. The wrong-doer thus repenting cannot abstain from regenerating himself. But this attempt may be temporary or permanent according as the will is weak or strong. Some nature is weak and vascillating; no effect on it lasts longer. Remorse prompts the man to regenerate himself, but after a temporary and futile attempt he relapses into his former life. There is some other nature which tries "to stifle the conscience" by turning his deaf ear to its voice and endeavours to revert to a life in a lower moral universe.

This is frequently the case with a great majority of men. But there is nature in which the salutary effect thus produced by Remorse takes deep root ; such nature incessantly endeavours to regain the moral height from which it has fallen ; and the result of its effort is that it gradually habituates itself to live in a higher moral sphere, involving a transformation of its whole character. When this transformation is complete the man may be said to have been morally liberated ; lapse into a lower life is impossible for him ; his actions become spontaneously adjusted to his ideal ; his whole will and character become sanctified ; the discrepancy between his higher and lower selves—between his reason and inclinations completely disappears, and what is more, his conscience no longer finds occasions to torment him, and remorse takes leave of him for good. Such is the state of complete moral transformation or regeneration, of moral liberation. But such a state remains always an ideal and never can be completely realised by any human being. No man can attain that state of moral “sanctification” as makes sin impossible ; the actual moral life of a man however much developed falls considerably short of the ideal. What is possible for him is to make incessant effort to live in accordance with the ideal and thus gradually to approximate to it as far as possible.

**X. Forgiveness :—**We have found that an evil deed necessarily leads to punishment which, again, leads to remorse and reformation ; thus an evil deed leads ultimately to a stage, in which it is wiped out and which therefore, shows its nullity—shows that it has no abiding place in the moral order and that the ideal the wrong-

doer follows is a low one—one which must give place to a higher ideal. But this result may be achieved without the imposition of punishment. In many instances reformation or correction may be effected, not by direct punishment, but by evoking the consciousness of a higher ideal in the mind of the wrong-doer, or raising him to a higher moral universe. And this may be done by education. Moreover, if mild treatment is found to produce the desirable result the modern humanitarian tendency forbids us to have recourse to harsh one. Hence education is the first step which society should take to reform a criminal. In those instances in which this is found possible the offence may be *forgiven, i. e.*, the offender may be allowed to remain unpunished. But it should be remembered here that forgiveness does not imply that guilt may escape punishment and the guilty may cease to have the consciousness of his guilt. "Forgiveness of sins is not the removal of punishment, for punishment cannot be avoided; nor is it the removal of the consciousness of the guilt, for the deed cannot be undone; it is *'fate reconciled by love,'*" (E. Caird. Hegel, p. 29).

**XI. Corruption of Society.**—The moral evil is found not only in the individual life but also in society. Both may be morally excellent or morally defective. The customs and institutions of a society may be such as in most instances aid the cultivation and development of virtues and check those of the opposite; or they may be such as in most instances work in the reverse order. Moral progress or civilization means that the social customs and institutions should be



arranged in such a way as "to make virtue as easy and vice as difficult as possible". But the actual state of any society falls exceedingly short of such an ideal. Like an individual life it is a mixture of good and evil states. In every society, however low, there are some, however few, customs and institutions which aid or tend to aid the growth and preservation of virtues, and there are others which do the opposite. For instance, even in the civilized society, we have, on the one hand, the wholesome institutions of the family, trade, the university, the church, &c., on the other, the unwholesome institutions of brothels, gambling dens, cribs, finishing schools, &c. Thus the degree of civilization is measured by the numerical superiority and preponderance of the former class of institutions over the latter. When the unwholesome customs and institutions are so numerous that they overpower the wholesome ones, society, like an individual life, begins to decline and fall ; and can be saved from its doom only by reformation. Such reformation usually comes from the prophets, or some other lesser great men who are born, as it were, to save the society from such widespread evil. So says *Bhagabatgita* :—

“यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।  
 अभ्युत्थामधर्मस्य तदात्मानम् सृजाम्यहम् ॥  
 परिव्राणाय साधूनाम् विनश्याय च दुष्कृताम् ।  
 धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥”

*i. e.* O Bharata, whenever the virtues are depreciated and the vices are prevalent I (*i. e.* God) incarnate myself. To liberate the virtuous, to crush the vicious and, to establish religion I am born (in the shape of the prophets)

age after age. Sometimes the reformation is effected by a revolution ; but usually the latter is not a less moral evil than the state of society itself. Sometimes, particularly in the modern age, the more civilized nations step in to punish the nation who has gone away from the path of righteousness, as in the case of the United States of America which waged war against the King of Spain in order to liberate, or at least on the pretension of liberating, the misgoverned Philipinos from his intolerable yoke. But it is not always safe for a single nation to sit in judgment upon another nation. In such cases several nations should combine to consider the desirability of the step.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Moral Progress.

I. **Meaning of progress** :—Progress is synonymous with development or evolution, and consists in a series of changes each of which is a step or stage that necessarily leads to a higher and richer step or stage until the final stage is reached,—the stage which is called the goal of the whole series,—the whole series being, thus, throughout, unitary and continuous, and the principle of such unity and continuity being *the idea of an end* which explains and harmonises the successive steps. Or, in short, *progress* is a continuous process which gradually approximates to an *ideal or ultimate end*, this ultimate end being the principle which runs through the process and thus explains, harmonises the stages through which it passes and connects them into a unitary and continuous whole. Thus progress implies (a) a series of changes of ever higher and richer complexity (*differentiation*), (b) unification of the changes into an organised whole (*integration*), (c) an ideal end which is the principle of such differentiation and unification (*final end or purpose*). The law of progress may, therefore, be formulated thus: “an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity is transformed into a definite, coherent heterogeneity” (Spencer); or it is the law of “advance through successive stages of simultaneous differentiation and unification to ever higher and richer forms of life” (Muirhead).

**II. Moral Progress :—(a) The nature of moral progress :—**The doctrine of moral progress, like that of biological and social progress, is not merely a hypothesis, but an indubitable truth from the ethical point of view. We have found that our moral life is explicable only as a progressive life, a life which passes through different stages at each of which it is in a special moral universe, guides itself in accordance with a special moral standard or ideal. Thus at a particular stage our moral life is an organised whole of facts determined and controlled by a single standpoint. But the different standpoints which it takes up for its guidance at the different stages, are not sporadic and entirely unconnected; they represent the successive forms of a single evolving standpoint—they are “the mutually related parts or elements in an organic whole viz. “some more universal end or purpose traceable in human history.” In Book II we have dealt with the different standpoints from which peoples estimate their moral judgments: we have shown there also that those standpoints are not entirely isolated, but connected with one another in such a wise that each represents a stage leading necessarily to another by way of reaction, exhibiting, as it were, that a form of dialectic runs through them all until it reaches the goal where it rests with entire satisfaction: each standpoint has, thus, been shown to be a partial and incomplete explanation of our moral life at a particular stage, and it is only the final and highest standpoint that affords the most satisfactory explanation in so far as the present condition of our moral reason has supplied us with such

a standpoint. And this standpoint, as we have found, is nothing but the perfection of our nature, the supreme end of our life. Thus the moral life is truly and satisfactorily explicable only by reference to a *telos* or end, a moral ideal. But the moral ideal which explains and guides our moral life is thus *inherently* progressive—it progresses toward its ideal, its own perfection. Again, as we have found in the first chapter of this Book, individuals are only integral parts of the larger wholes called society and the human Brotherhood. The progress of our moral life involves, therefore, the progress of the larger life of society and the human Brotherhood.

Though, thus, moral progress in the individual, society and the human race is theoretically incontrovertible, yet it demands a practical verification. Such verification will be obtained if we can show that the actual facts, the actual virtues, of the moral life of the individual, society and the human race at different times and ages have undergone gradual changes expressing ever higher forms of life, showing thereby the presence and operation, from the beginning, of a single ideal principle, a grand moral agent that is being gradually realised through those changes. This does not, of course, imply that the ideal is consciously and explicitly present at every stage of moral progress; the explanation of moral evolution does not require the explicit presence of the ideal at every stage; it is sufficient, that the explicit consciousness of the ideal gradually emerges itself in the course of its evolution. As in the case of reason, so in the case of morality the ideal works unconsciously and also consciously, and conceals itself under various strange forms.

We should here carefully distinguish two forms of moral progress, the mechanical form and the organic or teleological form. The former is explained by the law of struggle for existence and natural selection, while the latter by reference to the idea of an end. It is true that the external circumstances and the "environment" play an important part in determining the particular forms which the moral ideal takes on at different ages. But the action of those extraneous forces alone cannot account for moral progress. The moral ideal cannot be the growth of *non-moral* elements; *ought-to-be* cannot be explained by *is* or *must*. Moral progress does not mean the gradual growth of a moral ideal out of non-moral elements, but the gradual realisation of the moral ideal itself which is present and active from the beginning, but comes to assume special forms in response to the actions upon itself of those extraneous forces. It is true that at different ages people approached the moral ideal by different means; but although the nature of those means had been determined by their actual peculiar circumstances or environment, yet the choice of them must have been due to their free moral activity—the end to realise which the choice was made must have been first freely chosen by them. Hence it is only the moral ideal itself which is capable of explaining moral progress as a process of its own gradual realisation. This patent fact has been overlooked by Spencer and his followers; they have confounded moral progress with moral creation, the course with the origin, of morality. "Moral progress," observes Prof. James Seth, "is morality in progress, 'progressive morality'; never at any stage a progress

to morality, or a progress from the non-moral to the moral stage." But they have actually, tried to evolve the moral life out of a life which is absolutely *non-moral*—they have tried to explain the moral life by reference to its beginning which is absolutely *non-moral*. Thus the explanation offered by them is, if it is true, anthropological, not moral at all. Moral progress from the standpoint of a moralist, necessarily implies that man is *inherently* a moral being; that the germs of morality are embedded in his nature from the first, which in course of time develop and assume more and more definite and complex forms. This ever-presence of the moral ideal in man makes his moral life and its progress possible, just as the ever-presence of reason in him makes his intellectual life and its progress possible. If he were not moral and intellectual from the beginning no force in the world could make him moral and intellectual. The very idea of evolution implies that all the essential characteristics found in the more developed stages must be already present in the first stage; for otherwise, those characteristics will be quite new elements which cannot be explained by the process of evolution: or in other words, the process of evolution will fail to explain those for whose explanation it is sought. Therefore from the point of view of evolution a savage is a civilized man in germ, just as a seed is potentially a full-grown tree. For further criticism see Bk. II, Chap. V, § 1, and Criticism (a). For the view of Prof. Alexander whose mechanical explanation of moral progress is somewhat original, and for its criticism see Bk. II, pp. 130-33, and 135-38.

This essential condition of moral progress that man is a moral being from the beginning is capable not only of theoretical proof but also of corroboration by facts of moral history. The observation and examination of the manners and customs of the savages show that in every savage tribe some form of morality is found ; they consciously distinguish between right and wrong ; they approve some forms of activity and condemn the opposite, and have, thus, at least, the rudimentary consciousness of moral obligation. Nor is this all : they not only distinguish the right and the wrong type of conduct, they also distinguish the good and the bad type of character from which the conduct issues ; that is to say, they recognise such qualities as virtues, though, of course, with regard to their meaning and scope they considerably differ from the civilized people. We shall illustrate these facts later on. (For a fuller consideration of these facts see Bk. II, pp. 147-50 ; and also Janet's *Theory of Morals*, pp. 348-51).

(b) **The law of moral progress:**—We have already described the general character of the law of progress as applied to the animal world and the human society. Moral progress also is subject to a similar law. The moral life whether of the individual or of society or of the human race starts from a comparatively indefinite, incoherent, homogeneous state and passes gradually through various heterogeneous stages each of which is more definite and coherent than the preceding to a stage that is perfectly definite, coherent and heterogeneous : or as otherwise described, the moral life advances through continuously differentiating itself into



various moral ideas and habits, and at the same time integrating or unifying them all into a complex organised whole called a stage in its progress to ever higher and richer forms or stages of life. Now if we examine closely into the way in which such differentiation and integration take place, we find that it is something like this: as Prof. James Seth has truly observed, moral progress "is, in sum and substance, *the gradual discovery of the individual*," What it means is this: the highest form of moral life is the life of perfect moral independence and responsibility and this is also the highest form of moral differentiation. The moral independence and responsibility of a man are not attained all at once; they are the product of moral development through years and ages. Sir Henry Maine has observed that the movement of all progressive societies is a movement from *Status to contract*. At primitive times the individual was merged in, and identified with, the family, group or tribe, and had nothing which he could call his own; the law did not take account of him, but recognised only the larger whole of which he was a member. It was only gradually that the individual was finally substituted for the larger whole and made the exclusive subject of legal rights and obligations. The same is true of the individual regarded as moral. Originally he had no moral independence and responsibility. The manners and customs, or in a word the "*mores*" or the "*ethos*" of the group or tribe to which he belonged supplied him with the only standard of his activity: he had no choice in the matter; he was not allowed to question the validity

and obligatoriness of any of them, or rather no occasion arose for him to do so, for he was perfectly habituated to observe them: his morality was therefore what is called *customary morality*. It was only gradually that he emerged from such a state of bondage and attained his moral independence and responsibility: it was only after many centuries of moral struggle and development that he came to be recognised as an independent moral being having free private choice and moral responsibility for his own conduct. Formerly his duty was simply to *observe* the time-honoured customs without any reflection or criticism, now he is allowed to reflect about and criticise those customs. Such allowance implies that he has a right "to see *why* certain habits are to be followed, what *makes* a thing good or bad. *Conscience* is thus substituted for *custom*; *principles* take the place of external *rules*." (Profs. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 179). His present morality may therefore be called *reflective*. This does not mean that at modern times the "social customs have ceased to be, or even have been reduced in number. The exact contrary is the case. It is not that they have shrunk in importance, or that they have less significance for the individual's activity, or claim less of his attention. Again, the reverse is the case. But the individual has to grasp the meaning of these customs over and above the bare fact of their existence, and has to guide himself by their *meaning* and not by the mere fact noted." (Ibid, pp. 179-80).

Though the moral emancipation of the individual from the group or the tribe is itself a great achievement,

yet it is not the whole achievement. The *mere* emancipation is not really to discover him, but to lose him, because, the true individual is not an absolutely isolated unit but an integral part of the larger whole. Hence the true discovery of the individual is the discovery of his *personality*—the discovery that his true being is the being of the larger whole and *vice versa*.

Thus, moral progress starts from a stage which is more or less indefinite, incoherent, and homogeneous first, because the customs which determine right and wrong constitute a more or less homogeneous whole in which the units, though distinguished, are not arranged and integrated in accordance with their ethical importance; their meaning is not differentiated from their present forms; "the moral aspect of behavior and other aspects such as the conventional, the political, the legal" are not distinguished; the individual simply observes but not reflects upon the customs and thus does not, in any way, differentiate his moral life from the life of the whole; his life is completely merged or lost in the latter which is therefore no better than a homogeneous mass of undifferentiated units. Again, when the individual begins to emerge himself from such a state he begins to feel his moral independence, his personal responsibility for his own action; or in other words, he begins to feel that he is a distinct moral unit in the social whole and has a life of his own; though he still observes the social customs he observes them intelligently or with the distinct consciousness of their meaning; and if he finds any of them bad he feels that he has a right to criticise it and even to disobey it. At this stage the homogeneous

mass of customs is also correspondingly differentiated, the truly moral ones are distinguished from the conventional, the political and the legal ones, and are organised in accordance with their ethical importance: the homogeneous mass itself thus becomes differentiated, and also integrated into a more definite and coherent whole. The processes of differentiation and integration still go on: the individual comes to regard himself not only distinct from but also, at the same time, organically related to, the social whole; he no longer feels his interests as simply of his own but also as having an essential bearing upon the interests of others. Thus his moral ideal becomes more complex, his virtuous habits increase in number and complexity; their meanings are deepened and scope widened; in short his whole moral life becomes exceedingly complex. Not only so, as he advances in moralisation, his complex moral life becomes more and more systematic, being guided and unified by a single ultimate principle or ideal. Thus the integration of his moral life runs *pari passu* with its differentiation. Therefore we find that moral progress consists in the gradual discovery of the individual and is subject to the universal law of progress that "an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity is transformed into a definite, coherent heterogeneity."

(c) **Some special characteristics of the law:**—In the preceding section we have described the general characteristic of the law of moral progress. Now we go to describe some of its special characteristics. The moral emancipation of the individual involves, in the first place, a gradual determination of the moral

good, which, again, consists in a transition from the outside to the inside, from an external to an internal view, of morality : in the second place, it involves "the gradual subordination of the sterner to the gentler virtues"; and in the third place, it involves the deepening of the meaning and the widening of the sphere, of the virtues.

(i) The first special feature of moral progress is the gradual change made in the standpoint of morality. During the age of customary morality action was estimated from an external and utilitarian standpoint, by reference to its external consequences, whereas with the development of reflective morality action is judged from an internal standpoint, by reference to its motive. The result of this change is that the inner character of a man is taken into account more than his external action; that what he *is* is considered more valuable than what he *does*. Therefore he is declared good or bad, not because his action has produced good or bad consequence, but because he possesses a good or bad character from which his action has issued. But this shifting of the standpoint from conduct to character cannot stop here. Character is valued or condemned, not simply because it is the source of a good or a bad action, but *for its own sake*. The good character is valued because it is an end-in-itself, not a means to any other end; the bad character is condemned because it is not an end-in-itself, but a means to an end that stands in the way of the realisation of the end-in-itself. As Prof. Green has observed: "The real value of the virtue rises with the more full and clear conception of the end to which it is directed, as a character not a good

fortune, as a fulfilment of human capabilities from within not an accession of good things from without, as a function not a possession. The progress of mankind in respect of the standard and practice of virtue has lain in such a development of the conception of its end." (Prolegomena, p. 265). Thus moral progress means the progressively spiritual interpretation of human life.

(ii) The second special feature of the law is, as Prof. James Seth remarks, "the gradual subordination of the sterner to the gentler virtues, of the virtues of being or security, to those of well-being or amenity." We have found in the preceding section that the gradual change of the standpoint from the external to the internal view of conduct involves a progressively spiritual interpretation of human life. The latter, again, involves that greater value is set on the spiritual virtues than on the physical, on the virtues of well-being or amenity than on the virtues of mere being or security. The reasons are obvious: before the individual attains his moral independence, he is not recognised as an independent moral being, he is regarded simply as a physical being, or at least more as a physical being than a spiritual; the consequence is, the physical virtues which are required for the preservation of being are demanded of him more strictly than the spiritual virtues are. But with the recognition that he is a distinct and independent moral or spiritual being, the spiritual virtues which are required for the well-being, not only of himself, but also of others, come to be regarded as more valuable and necessary. The physical

virtues are usually stern and of militant type, while the spiritual or mental virtues are gentle and amiable; the former are self-regarding, unsympathetic or inconsiderate, while the latter are other-regarding, sympathetic or considerate; the physical courage and the heroic deeds of the battle-field are instances of the former, whereas sympathy, benevolence, forgiveness, humility, obedience, gentleness, patience, resignation, are instances of the latter. Moral progress, therefore, means that the physical nature of man is gradually subordinated to his spiritual nature; that, therefore, his physical virtues are also controlled by and made subservient to, his spiritual virtues.

(iii) The third special feature of the law is that the meaning of the virtues is gradually deepened and their scope gradually widened. With the deeper understanding of the moral nature of man the meaning of the virtues is also deepened, and with the discovery of his personality, of his organic relation to society, the sphere of his virtues is indefinitely extended. We have found that moral progress consists in the gradual emancipation of the individual as a distinct and independent moral being, the gradual discovery of his individuality; but it does not stop there: it goes further and ends in the discovery of his personality, of his universal nature which binds him with all beings and things. Therefore the discovery of his personality means the discovery that his own good is the common good, the good not only of the community or the tribe to which he belongs but also of all communities or tribes, of the whole human family, of the whole

fraternity of all men. Thus moral progress is, as Prof. James Seth remarks, "growth from particularism to universalism, from patriotism or nationalism to humanism or cosmopolitanism."

**III. Verification of the law:**—We have described the nature of moral progress, and the general as well as the special characteristics of the law of moral progress; we now propose to trace up such law in the concrete moral life of the individual, society and the human race. As elsewhere so in ethics, the mere statement of a principle is not sufficient, because not so conclusive, unless and until its interpretation is verified by the facts of moral history. As Prof. James Seth observes: "The verification of any interpretation of the moral ideal remains incomplete until it is shown to explain the history of evolving moral life, the process of moral experience as a whole. The ideal must be the unifying principle of the successive historical manifestations of morality, as well as of its various present forms." Indeed, the main function of ethics will remain incomplete and unfulfilled unless it can discover an "increasing purpose through the ages," the dialectic movement of a universal standard or ideal in and through the moral ideas, habits and institutions in different societies at different ages. Therefore, we should now consider—.

(a) **Moral progress in the individual:**—If we examine the moral life of the individual we more distinctly discover the control of the law as described above. In the beginning, as we have found, he is scarcely aware of his moral freedom, he is scarcely



conscious that he is a distinct and independent moral being; the moral criterion in accordance with which he regulates his conduct more or less spontaneously is supplied by the manners and customs of the society to which he belongs; his moral life is therefore identified with that of the society. This is the first stage of his moral life. But human nature cannot rest long in a state of bondage. It necessarily passes to a higher stage at which his individuality begins to emerge and assert itself; here he feels that he has a life of his own which is not entirely identical with that of society. But this emergence of the consciousness of his individuality is only gradual; at first it assumes a purely *negative* and *antagonistic* attitude towards society; like an unruly horse it asserts its existence everywhere in all possible ways; whatever limits its unlimited freedom or binds it in any way is condemned and rebelled against; it wants to live in an absolutely free and open atmosphere where it can breathe and soar freely. This is the second stage at which his life may be said to appear in its truly moral form. At the first stage his attitude is entirely passive and blindly conciliatory, at the second it is wholly free and antagonistic. But the true individuality is not something entirely negative and antagonistic; the individuality which is purely negative and militant should be checked, controlled and taken up into higher individuality or personality. This last stage of transition is most important and far-reaching from the ethical point of view. We shall therefore dwell on it somewhat at length.

(i) **Temperance or Self-discipline** :—As we

have found (see Bk. II, pp. 143-45), individuality is formed by the appetites, passions and desires which separate one man from another ; it is therefore the life of natural impulse, mere sensibility by virtue of which he is a mere animal. So that mere individuality is only one side of man, his another and higher side being reason which binds him with all beings. The true concrete man is a rational animal and his true nature is his personality, i. e. his sensibility as guided by his reason. Therefore, the essence of morality consists in "the establishment of the order of reason in the chaos of natural impulse, and character means nothing but a system of inclinations disciplined by reason." Thus moral development means the gradual transformation of individuality into personality—the gradual subordination of passions and appetites to reason. This discipline of natural impulses by reason, the conquest of the lower or passional self by the higher or rational self is *temperance* or *self-discipline*. *Intemperance*, on the other hand, is the conquest of reason by sensibility and therefore results in moral degeneration and disorganisation. Temperance is, therefore, one of the essential virtues that a man should cultivate for his moral regeneration and development. Temperance has two sides, a negative and a positive side. The *mere* subordination of the natural impulses constitutes its *negative* side. In as far as this side is concerned a man should cultivate the habit of self-denial or self-sacrifice, i. e. should gradually learn to sacrifice his passions and desires in order that his reason may reign supreme. Here lies the relative truth of *asceticism*. But

true self-sacrifice does not mean the total suppression but the relative subordination of sensibility ; for moral development means the development of our total self, and the latter will be impossible if we altogether suppress sensibility which is one side of the total self. (See Ibid). Thus the natural impulses should have their indulgence under the due supervision of reason. But they are not always in their normal state ; some are unruly and claim undue indulgence. So that it is necessary to know those impulses which are our real enemy, and should therefore be checked and controlled : hence self-discipline always requires *self-knowledge*. Casual *self-examination* is also necessary, for, otherwise, we cannot know whether we are progressing or lagging behind.

But the subordination of the impulses implies that there should be a single principle, end or purpose to realise which they all must be employed ; the whole energy of our life should be devoted to some disinterested end, if we want deliverance from the slavery of the natural impulses. This concentration of our whole energy upon the realisation of a single disinterested end, this employment of all our natural forces in the service of a single universal life-purpose is the *positive* side of temperance. "Unity, simplicity, singleness of purpose—the correlation and integration of all the tendencies of the individual nature—this is the mark of a perfectly temperate, a thoroughly disciplined life. The forces of the nature are not merely checked and conquered ; they are engaged in the service of an end which can utilise them all, and whose service is perfect

freedom from the bondage of mere unregulated impulse." (Prof. James Seth, *Principles*, p. 247). All great men in all departments of life at all ages had one single disinterested dominant purpose to which they bent all their energies and impulses. Here, again, *self-knowledge* is necessary. The dominant interest of a man is unique or peculiar to himself, and it is only he who can know what it is ; the inner capacity of a man is best known to himself, and he alone can know the nature of the end which should dominate his life consistently with his capacity.

(ii) **Self-culture** :—Self-discipline, taken as a whole, is negative and one-sided ; for it consists in merely checking and subjugating the selfish impulses to the rule of reason, and thus in engaging them in the service of some disinterested end. But this is only a condition of self-development ; the true self-development involves not only the subjugation of the opposing impulses but also the education of the favourable ones and the development of all the higher powers and capacities. This latter function is *self-culture* : self-discipline and self-culture are, thus, equally essential conditions of self-development ; the former is the negative and the latter the positive condition. We have found that we are to develop the *total* self which is the true self. Therefore self-culture includes the culture of all the phases of our nature, of intellect, emotion and volition "each in its perfection, and all in the harmony of a complete and single life ;" our life is an organic whole, as modern psychology has proved it to be, and therefore its different phases are dis-

tingent and interrelated at the same time. The true self-development, thus involves not only the cultivation of different powers but also their harmonious development; symmetry is the essence of true self-development.

The true self-culture includes also the physical culture—culture of the bodily powers. Man is not merely a spiritual but also a physical being ; the physical body is a necessary condition of our spiritual life, its affections considerably influencing the tenor of our mental life : health is therefore the foundation of moral life, though not a part of it. So that the asceticism which teaches us to despise the body, to escape from it, is an one-sided doctrine and should be condemned. The cultivation of the physical virtues is therefore as necessary as that of the mental or spiritual virtues. (See, above, chap. iv, pp, 117-20).

Self-culture, like self-discipline, requires *self-knowledge*. If we do not know what we are, what are the powers and capacities that are to be cultured, self-culture is impossible. Again, self-culture requires that we should, first, find out the end or purpose of our life, and cling to it as fast as possible through "all the storm and stress of passion and of circumstance" until we reach the goal.

(iii) **Transcendence of individuality : the ideal life** :—So long we have dealt with only the way in which our individuality should be developed. But individuality is only one side of the total self whose another side is our social life and these two together constitute our personality. So that the true and complete self-culture is not exclusively the culture of our

individual powers and capacities, it is the culture of our personality, i. e. the culture of our individuality with the ultimate view to the employment of it for the realisation of the good of society and finally, of the good of the universe. This transcendence of individuality, this transition from the particular to the universal, marks, therefore, the advent of a higher life,—a life in which we live and soar freely in the atmosphere of the infinite and ideal. But this takes place slowly and gradually in various ways. In every evolving moral life there is such a crisis as *conversion*. Wherever a man becomes aware that there is a higher moral universe than that within which he lives and that he ought to transcend the latter in order to live in the former, he experiences such a phenomenon. Whenever he does something noble and great whether it is an act of philanthropy, or the devotion to the cause of science, art, or religion—he feels self-elevation, rises to a higher level of life and escapes from the particular to the universal; he finds that his life has taken on a quite new aspect, that he lives and moves in a new world and that, thus, he has passed through a crisis of moral conversion. Thus devotion to any noble cause is a potent means of converting our individuality into personality, of elevating ourselves above the level of an isolated, short, brutish life of sensibility :—.

But a life, thus idealised, is not always free from danger. No doubt moral idealism expresses the highest phase of our life, it ennobles our life and elevates it above the level of the particular and the low; but it may bring on also evil consequence: intense devotion to

the infinite and ideal may sometimes make a man indifferent to the finite and actual; the divine vision may distort the earthly one. We should therefore beware that our zeal for the infinite and ideal may not make us forget that it is also our duty to preserve the finite and actual, that our individuality should not be absorbed but be maintained by our personality, that our natural impulses should not be suppressed but be duly sustained by our higher aspirations; that, in short, we should not forget that we are first human then divine, first finite and actual then infinite and ideal.

(iv). **The true nature of the moral ideal:—** We have said above that we can escape from the 'cave' of the particular and rise to the level of the infinite and ideal by devoting ourselves to any noble and great cause whether intellectual, æsthetic or religious; but we should always carefully remember that the true moral ideal is the Good, not the True or the Beautiful: truth and beauty separated from goodness are non-moral, though not immoral; goodness, on the other hand, separated from truth and beauty, is narrow and incomplete. The fact is, these three categories represent the ideals of the three phases of our life; but our real concrete life is not, as modern psychology has proved, simply intellectual, or emotional, or volitional; it is all at the same time: thus these three phases as well as their ideals cannot be separated. Therefore the true ideal of our concrete life is that which is the synthesis of the Good, the True and the Beautiful; the true moral ideal is the perfection of our whole life which consists in the separate yet harmonious realisation of the Good, the

True and the Beautiful. The realisation of the moral Good thus involves the realisation of these three ideals at the same time ; devotion to any one of them exclusively does not therefore lead to the full realisation of the moral ideal. These considerations show the inconclusiveness and one-sidedness of the views which merge the Good in either the True or the Beautiful. With Plato and Aristotle the highest form of life is the life of philosophic contemplation, in which no place is assigned to the life of practical activity and ordinary sensibility ; while with the Moral Sense school the culture of the Beautiful is the essence of all moral culture. (See Bk. I, pp. 124-25). Both these two theories which are respectively called *intellectualism* and *æstheticism* are ethically inconclusive and unsatisfactory ; they are based on the misconception of human nature that it is not an organic whole. Likewise, the view which regards Righteousness the essence of the moral Good and identifies the moral culture with the philanthropic activity, denouncing the culture of the True and the Beautiful as entirely secular, is no less one-sided and unsatisfactory.

(v). **The study of the idealised lives:—**We have found that devotion to any noble and disinterested cause is an indispensable means to the idealisation of our life. But, perhaps, the more effective means is to study the idealised lives, and compare them, with our own. It is a common adage that one living example is more potent than a hundred precepts. The path of morality, no less than the path of virtue, is thorny and as difficult as the sharp edge of a razor. Under this



circumstance it is always safe and profitable to hold up some external pattern before us as our guide. Such patterns or types are not wanting in the world of morality: they are Buddha, Mahomed, Jesus, Socrates, Luther, Nanak, Chaitanya and a host of other lesser or greater saints. Still more we may profit by keeping good company and associating ourselves with the heroes and saints who may happen to live at our times.

(vi). **Self-examination and Self-reflection :—**

We have said before that casual self-examination is indispensable both for self-discipline and self-culture ; but it is not less so for self-idealisation. At every step we should see, by examining ourselves, whether we are properly adhering to the ideal, are moulding our conduct thereby and thus profiting by such adherence. *Self-reflection* is equally indispensable. There are energetic souls who in the zeal of incessant activity entirely forget themselves. But entire self-forgetfulness is sometimes baneful and stunts the growth of individuality ; we have found that the true self-development consists, not in self-forgetfulness, but in self-idealisation. Hence the need of our occasional return to our inner nature, to self-reflection. As Prof. Mackenzie has observed: "There are energetic natures, like Cæsar or Napoleon, that seem able to go on with a perpetual activity, scarcely requiring rest or reflection. But the activity of such men is not usually the wisest or the most beneficial. There are others whose special mission it seems to be to withdraw from the world of action and bring messages to mankind from the inner world of feeling and reflection. But the wisdom of such men is

apt to be deficient in the depth of universal applicability which a wider contact with life can give. The Wordsworths and Emersons are not equal to Shakespeares and Goethes. For the majority of men, at any rate, times of action naturally alternate with times of reflection, times of creation with times of re-creation. In retirement we criticise the acts of life; in life we criticise the ideas of retirement. Action and reflection are the gymnastic and music of moral culture." (Ethics, pp. 365-66).

(vii). **Justice and Love:**—We have found that our true life is not merely individual but also social; therefore when self-development reaches the stage at which the self identifies its own good with that of society, the cultivation and development of such social virtues as *justice* and *love* become imperative. As self-discipline and self-culture are two important virtues which are indispensable for the development of individuality, so justice and love are the virtues which are indispensable for the development of personality. For a full account of the virtues of justice and love see chapter iv of this Book.

(viii). **The highest moral idealisation:**—The moral development reaches its highest stage, personality gets at its utmost expansion, when the supreme good of our life is identified with the good of the universe, when morality culminates and takes its rest in religion, and the moral ideal coincides with the religious ideal. Before such consummation the moral life might pass under the designation of secular, and the moral law might seem less imperative; but as soon as it takes place the moral life shines with a new sacred light

and assumes a divine form and meaning ; the moral law appears now absolutely imperative, not because it is now regarded as imposed by an external Almighty Being but because it is the law imposed by our true self—the highest or absolute Self in us. Self-development therefore means the gradual realisation of the latter—our gradual approximation towards its nature. At this stage our individuality grows up to be more prominent and intense, not because it has acquired any absolute independent value but because it has now come to be regarded as unique, and the divinely-appointed mission of our life can be fulfilled only by the rational discipline and harmonious development of its unique character: here a man feels that he is alone in the universe to fulfil a vocation which cannot be fulfilled by any body else, and he alone is answerable to God for its non-fulfilment. For a full account of the different virtues which we ought to cultivate for self-development, see chapter iv of this Book.

This brief survey of the development of the individual moral life clearly shows that it starts from a comparatively indefinite homogeneous stage of *customary* morality, passes through a stage at which the individual differentiates himself from society, feels, for the first time, his moral freedom and responsibility, and develops new moral ideas and habits, to a still higher and more complex stage at which his abstract particular individuality gets transformed into his concrete universal personality, and new higher moral ideas and habits are formed and developed: it reaches its highest stage when the moral ideal is identified with the divine ideal, the

moral life is recognised to be an essential part of the religious life ; here the moral life becomes most complex or heterogeneous, because it relates itself with all beings and things, and thus develops very various and most comprehensive complex moral ideas and virtues. Again, all along, the gradual differentiation of the moral life runs *pari passu* with the process of integration of the gradually-developed moral ideas and habits by the successive forms of a single moral ideal, which becomes fully explicit only at the highest stage : thus each successive stage of the progressive moral life is more differentiated or heterogeneous than the preceding, the highest stage being the most definite, heterogeneous and coherent. Hence we can say that in the progressive individual moral life "an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity is transformed into a definite, coherent heterogeneity." This implies, as we have found, that moral progress consists in the gradual discovery of individuality and finally, of personality, which, again, involves that the moral standpoint grows gradually to be less external, and more internal, or morality becomes less and less customary, and more and more reflective ; that the physical or sterner virtues are gradually subordinated to the spiritual or gentler virtues, and, lastly, that the meaning of the virtues is gradually deepened and their scope gradually widened.

(b) **Moral progress in society** :—If we now turn our attention to society we find that there is not only a definite movement in the moral ideal but also that that movement obeys the universal law of progress. Thus, for instance, in the ancient Hindu society there

was a progress from the customary morality enjoined in the *Sanhitas* and *Brahmanas* to the highly reflective and spiritualised morality expounded in the *Upanishads* and *Bhagabatgita*. We find a similar movement in the Jewish society: the elementary moral ideas embodied in the Decalogue gradually developed into the highly reflective and spiritualised moral ideas expounded by the later prophets and embodied in the Sermons on the Mount. In early Greek society a similar movement is found. The customary morality of early Greece gradually changed into the highly reflective morality of the later philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics. In all these instances the nature of the movement obeys the law of moral progress; because, in the first place, the movement is from the customary morality which is comparatively homogeneous i. e., indefinite and elementary, to the reflective morality which is comparatively heterogeneous i. e., definite and complex or differentiated into greater number of moral ideas and habits. For instance, the simple principles embodied in the Ten Commandments came gradually to include many finer virtues which were unknown before: thus "Thou shalt not lie" came to include the cases of lying not only by words but also by deeds; similarly, "Thou shalt not kill" came to imply abstinence not only from murder but also from any act that may, in any way, injure the physical well-being. Likewise the traditional morality of ancient Greece finally differentiated itself into numerous virtues which were embodied in the elaborate table of virtues prepared by Aristotle. In the second place, the movement is towards

greater definiteness and integration. The customary morality embodied in the *Sanhitas* and *Brahmanas* is merely an aggregate of external rules more or less unconnected with one another, while the highly reflective and spiritualised morality expounded in the *Upanishads* and *Bhagabatgita* consists of principles which are deduced from one single principle, viz. the ultimate nature of man as man—the relation of man to God, and are, therefore, the connected parts of a whole. Similarly, the Ten Commandments are more or less unconnected *external* rules, while the Sermons on the Mount point to and emphasize the *inward* character of the laws and are based on a single principle viz. love to God and to our neighbours. A similar integrating movement is found in Greek morality; with the later Greek philosophers duties are not sporadic rules, and the virtues sporadic habits: all duties are deduced from a single principle, viz. the relation of a man to the State—all duties are duties of a good *citizen*, and all virtues are integral parts of a single system.

The foregoing clearly shows also that the movement is towards the gradual discovery of individuality and finally, of personality. The reflective morality whether of Indian, Jewish or Greek society is characterized by the emphasis laid on the importance of the individuality as well as the personality of a man. This, again, implies that the movement is from the external to the internal view of morality, to the spiritual or gentler virtues, and finally to the gradual deepening of the meaning as well as to the gradual widening of the sphere, of virtues.

(c) **Moral progress in the human race :—**

So far we have traced the growth of morality in the individual and society, we now come to the consideration of moral progress in the human race, of the growth of a universal moral order. The task is difficult for two reasons : in the first place, it is very wide ; in the second place, we have very inadequate knowledge of the ultimate nature of the universal moral order. The general features of the moral standard reached by an individual or a nation can be easily ascertained and by reference thereto the different stages of his or its moral life can be easily explained and harmonised : but the moral ideal of the human race, the universal moral order, is still in the process of realisation, is not as yet completed ; its general features being, therefore, inadequately known, we have no such adequate clue as may enable us to satisfactorily explain and harmonise the facts of the universal moral history. Under this circumstance, what we can do is to show that there are tendencies towards a universal moral ideal, that the moral stage the human race has hitherto reached shows a tendency to a still higher stage, and that the moral progress hitherto made has obeyed the universal law of progress, thus pointing to a universal moral order which alone can satisfactorily explain it and harmonise all its stages with one another.

(i) If we examine the primitive societies we find one important fact, viz. "*the dominant influence of group life* ;" in them, every thing is determined for the individual who has therefore no right against the larger whole of which he is a part. The striking example of

such merging of the individual in the family is found in the *patria potestas* of the Romans. Here the head of the family had absolute authority against which the individual had no rights. Later on the family or group expanded into the State such, for example, as the Greek city-states. But here, too, the individual was lost in the State which was all-in-all, the only ethical unit that claimed absolute authority over and unconditional service upon, him, allowing him to own nothing of his own. Plato's *Republic* is nothing but the description of such an ideal Hellenic State.

In Aristotle's *Politics* we find a change of this standpoint: with him, the individual is the true ethical unit and the State is only the means to the realisation of his moral life. But he still maintains that the individual is, after all, a "political animal" and ceases to be a moral being when separated from the State. The entire change of such a standpoint is met with in the teachings of the Sophists who regarded the State as an artificial product, and the individual as the only reality. The early Socratic schools also had laid more emphasis on the attainment of the individual good than on that of the State. But the real turning point was supplied by the actual break-down of the State itself: when the State dwindled, decayed and finally broke down the individual had no other alternative than to fall upon himself, to look within himself for discovering the good of his life; this led to political scepticism in the Post-Aristotelian period. The Stoics' Ideal State has nothing corresponding to it on earth, and the Epicureans' ideal is not political at all; for them friendship takes the place



of citizenship and supplies the only means of union between man and man. Thus we find that in early Greek society there is a movement towards the change of standpoint from the State to the individuals; and along with this change we find another important change, viz, that, formerly, all the individuals were not included in the State, therefore in the world of moral beings; whereas latterly, in the Stoic Ideal State every human being whether a male or a female, a gentleman or a slave, a Greek or a barbarian, was included. Thus, as Prof. James Seth remarks, "the discovery of the individual meant a great widening, as well as a great deepening of the moral consciousness of the Greeks."

The same kind of movement is found also in the Jewish society. Like the Greeks the Hebrews also lived a corporate life and identified the individual with the State; for them sin and righteousness were national and so the punishment and reward: not only so, for the sins of the forefathers the descendants had to suffer; for the sins of Adam and Eve the whole human race was punished. But it was only with the dissolution of the State that the individual was morally emancipated, that he came to be regarded as the only moral unit who alone was to be punished for his sin and rewarded for his righteousness. Christianity emphasized this fact with greater force. But it did not teach mere individualism but also socialism: it brought a divine message not only for the individual but also for society. Gradually the civil society became identified with the ecclesiastical polity, the State became one with the Church. This was particularly the case throughout the

Middle Ages. The individual, again, was merged in the State, though of a different nature. The Reformation was one of the main causes which wrought out the break-down of Mediævalism and, along with it, the moral emancipation of the individual. The Protestant interpretation of Christianity laid emphasis more on the value of the individual than on that of the State. But later on, the feudal system formed the military State in which the individual was again absorbed. The revival of industry once more gave the individual some importance; but the rise of Capitalism, again, undermined his independence, and the modern tendency to Socialism seems to involve a tendency to merge him again in the State.

From this brief historical survey it is plain that the direction of movement towards the discovery of the individual has always been zigzag; this fact alone proves that there has been a real progress, for every real progress being *dialectical*, each stage of it which is more or less abstract and incomplete necessitates the transition to a higher and opposite stage: thus socialism has revoked individualism which, again, has revoked socialism, and so on. This alternate supremacy of society and the individual shows that the true society or the true individual has as not as yet been discovered. For the true society does not exclude the individual, nor the latter the former. Therefore the struggle has always been to discover the individual *in* society, i. e. his *personality*. This means that the general tendency of moral progress has been to give a definite place to the individual in the State, that the

caste-system has gradually been displaced by the democratic system, and that the lower classes of people have gradually been recognised as citizens and as possessing the right of taking part in the administration of the country. But though the caste-system has not as yet been completely abolished, and thus still been standing in the way of perfect political freedom and equality, yet a tendency in the direction of a true Individualism is clearly visible.

Moreover, the progress of science and philosophy has shown that all men are integral parts of the world-system, and has, thus, at least to a certain extent, levelled down the imaginary and superstitious barriers that have so long stood in the way of one caste or nation uniting with another. The anxiety to regenerate the "depressed classes" is the most characteristic feature of the present age. The humanitarian tendency, thus generated, of the present century, in all its forms, is the surest sign that the higher classes of people are gradually coming to see that the lower classes are as human as they themselves are, and are, therefore like them, ends-in-themselves or have special missions of their life. The principles of love and the social sympathy which are working behind such a tendency have been developing surely, though slowly, in us, and gradually leading us to discover a common moral personality behind our individuality, behind the barrier of our race, caste, and creed.

(ii) Moral progress in the human race becomes more perceptible when we see that new obligations and virtues have developed and their meanings have been

deepened in the course of years and ages. We have found above that the earlier form of morality everywhere is *customary*, and its later or more developed form is *reflective*: this means that the principle of morality has gradually been based upon the deeper conception of human nature; that is to say, the moral principle has gradually acquired more spiritual meaning. Not only so, the area of the customary morality is limited to a group or a tribe, while that of the reflective morality tends gradually to extend over the whole human race. These two facts can be proved by tracing the growth of, for instance, two cardinal virtues as *Courage* and *Temperance*. Take the case of courage first: in all primitive societies courage exhibited itself particularly in the form of *physical* or *martial* courage. Even the Greeks who "delighted to honour" it restricted it to "resistance to fear in the presence of danger and death." But in modern times its area has considerably been extended. "Besides danger and death in battle, there is the danger to health and life in the mission field, the city slum, and the fever ward, which makes the foreign missionary, the slum sister, and the hospital nurse as heroic types among ourselves as the citizen soldier was among the Greeks." Besides, this virtue has also acquired a more spiritual meaning in modern times. There is a *mental* or *moral* courage as there is physical. It exhibits itself not only in patiently bearing those mental pains which arise from disagreement and misunderstanding with one's relatives and friends, or from "the social ostracism inflicted by the majority of particular class or profession upon an offending

member, e. g. by a church upon a clergyman who denounces its corruptions, or by the press upon an editor who denounces forms of social immorality that are generally winked at." (Prof. Muirhead, *Ethics*, p. 226).

Take the case of Temperance next: the Greeks understood it to be connected with only the right regulation of the appetites for food, drink and sex; but in modern times it is applied to many other forms of self-sacrifice; besides, the principles on which they based their condemnation of some forms of self-indulgence are not as deep as they are with us. The modern name of Temperance is self-control which is a wider virtue; it includes not only the control of our appetites but also of our passions, affections, sentiments, as well as of our desires, thoughts and actions; again, "along with the extended ideas of our duty to humanity, and especially to women, has gone the application of the virtue to new relations. An obvious instance of the former is the appropriation of the word 'temperance' to a special form of self-control, viewed as a duty to society at large as much as to oneself or to the state. From the general virtue for self-control in matters of sense, self-control in matters of drink has broken away, and set up, as it were, for itself as an independent virtue. Similarly, the range of the virtue of self-control in matters of sex has immensely widened." (Ibid, pp. 227-28). The higher conception of the position of women in modern times has given new meaning and emphasis to the virtue under the names of chastity and chivalry.

¶ This widening of the area of the virtue has gone *pari*

*passu* with the "deepening of our conception of the principles on which the virtue rests." With the Greeks these principles are threefold: one of them is that "all indulgence should be avoided which unfits a man for the discharge of his duties in peace or war;" the other is that "such a check should be kept on the lusts of the flesh as may prevent them from issuing in.....a kind of self-assertion and aggression upon the rights of others in respect of person and property;" the third is "that the kind of pleasure with which temperance has to do is in some way unworthy of man, because one of which the other animals are susceptible." (Green, *Prolegomena*, p. 285). But the principle upon which the virtue rests in modern times is that "humanity in the person of every one is to be treated always as an end, never merely as a means." Though even the modern civilised societies are far away from acting upon it, "but in their conscience they recognize the principle as it was not recognized in the ancient world." (*Ibid*, p. 288).

Thus we find that not only the range of the application of these two virtues has considerably widened, but also that the conceptions of the principles upon which they rest have gradually been deepened. And the same is true of all other virtues. Furthermore, these changes have necessitated the changes in the standpoints from which the virtues were viewed in ancient times. As we have found (see, above, § b), the standpoint of the customary morality is external, whereas that of the reflective morality is internal, and this change of standpoint is necessarily followed by the subordination of the physical virtues to the spiritual.

From the above it is also manifest that the law of moral progress in the human race bears closest resemblance to the law of progress in general ; as elsewhere so here the moral differentiation goes hand-in-hand with the moral integration : the widening of the area of the virtues means their differentiation, their application to new relations, and the deepening of their significance means their moral integration, their derivation from a single deeper principle. All virtues, as we have found, are different forms which the same ultimate virtue, viz. the habit of realising the common human good, assumes under different conditions and influences of environment at different times and ages : and the recognition of the conception of the common good as the ultimate basis of all duties and virtues, in modern times, plainly shows that the duties and virtues are no longer regarded as sporadic phenomena but integral parts of a system. Hence we can say here, as we have said elsewhere, that in moral progress in the human race "an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity is transformed into a definite, coherent heterogeneity."

Though the foregoing array of facts strongly indicates that a universal moral order is realising itself in and through the human race, it cannot prove the ultimate reality of such an order : what *is*, cannot prove what *ought-to-be* ; the actual may suggest, but cannot prove the ideal, for the one is a matter of experience, while the other is a matter of faith or reflection ; the investigation of one is a problem of science, while the investigation of the other that of metaphysics. Hence the need for a metaphysical basis of ethics.

## APPENDIX.

### B. A. Examination Papers.

(*Calcutta University.*)

### Ethics.

1909.

1. Explain the terms positive, normative, and practical as applied to Ethics as a science. Discuss the suitability of each. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 6-12).

2. What are the Sciences that Ethics rests upon, and what other Sciences depend upon Ethics for part of their data? Explain the relation in each case. (For answer see Bk. I, Chap. II).

3. Characterise the object and process of moral judgment and distinguish them from the object and process of prudential judgment. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 106-19).

4. Examine the view that the Freedom of the Will is a postulate of moral judgment. (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 186-91).

5. Give a classification of the springs of action on a psychological basis. What, in your opinion, is the process by which their place is determined in a well-ordered moral life? (For answer of the first part see Bk. I, pp. 71-79; for answer of the second part see pp. 7-9, and pp. 111-15).

6. Is there any place for Conscience as distinguished from Prudence in a system of Hedonism? (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 150-61).

7. What is the explanation given of moral obligation from the point of view of Evolutionary Ethics? (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 101-5).

\*8. "Some laws express what is, some what must be, and



some what ought to be." Illustrate this. Under which of these categories does Moral Law fall, and how? What is the relation of Moral Law to Divine Law and Political Law? (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 88-93).

9. Explain Bentham's classification of the so-called Sanctions of Morality, and the improvement introduced into it by Mill. (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 58-61).

10. Can you distinguish Egoism as a philosophical theory from Selfishness in practical conduct? Is either ethically justifiable? (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 44-54).

11. Explain fully your idea of an organism. In what sense and to what extent is the analogy of an organism applicable to human society? (For answer see Bk. III pp. 7-12)

12. Can you give an illustration of a Conflict of Duties? Can each of the conflicting elements in such a case be properly called a duty? What is the ethical solution for such a conflict? (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 145-47, and Bk. III, pp. 91-92).

### 1910.

1. Define and distinguish the meanings of the term 'law' as applied in Natural Science, Jurisprudence, and Ethics. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 88-93).

2. 'Ethics is the science of the conduct of man as a social being.' Write a brief exposition of this. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 19-22).

3. Discuss the value of the historical method as applied to Ethics, showing the bearing on this of Aristotle's dictum 'First in time, and first in the nature of things'. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 38-39).

4. What are the main psychological divisions of the mental activities? Show how by different ethical theories different relative importance is attached to these. How in your opinion ought weight to be laid on each of these divisions? (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 47-49; and also Bk. II, p. 35).

5. Why is it necessary for ethics to have both a psychological and a metaphysical basis? To what defects are ethical theories liable which neglect either of these? (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 16-19, and pp. 26-28).

6. Give an account of the nature of the moral judgment, showing wherein it differs from the logical judgment. What are the objects with which it may be said to be concerned, and to what controversy has this led? State your own opinion on this. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 103-119).

7. Explain what is meant by moral judgments. What in your view are the main factors to be considered in a theory of rewards and punishments? (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 103-6 and Bk. III, pp. 211-15).

8. What contributions have rational and the evolutionist schools made towards the advancement of ethical science? How may the study of these theories be said to bear influence on the practical life? (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 14-16; and also pp. 90-98).

9. What ethical schools have employed physical or chemical analogies in establishing their theories? Why are these analogies to be rejected in favour of the biological analogy? (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 92-98).

10. Give a brief account of the development of the moral law in the life of the individual describing the various stages through which it passes, (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 255-67).

11. How is the existence of the state to be justified ethically? What are its ethical functions and wherein ought its action to be limited? (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 184-89).

### 1911.

1. What do you understand to be the scope of Ethics? Explain its relation to (a) Psychology, (b) Metaphysics. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 12-13; pp. 17-19, and pp. 26-28).

2. Wherein does an action become moral? Indicate the place of desire in Ethics. Explain 'Universe of Desire,' and show its bearing on moral life. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 4—5; Bk. II, pp. 22—26 and Bk. I, pp. 61—70; Bk. II, pp. 73—74).

Or.

Discuss the basis of moral obligation. Explain in this connection the value, if any, of internal and external sanction. (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 55—64).

3. Explain and criticise the doctrine of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. What is meant by quality of Pleasures, as distinguished from quantity? Discuss the validity of the distinction. (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 56—79).

Or.

Discuss the leading ethical standards. Point out any special excellence that in your opinion characterises any of them. (For answer see Bk. II).

4. Explain clearly the respective claims of Egoistic and Universalistic Hedonism. Are the two capable of reconciliation? (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 55—57, and pp. 63—69).

5. Give a critical exposition of Kant's view of the Moral Reason. It has been said that "the idea of a categorical imperative lands us in sheer emptiness." Discuss this proposition. (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 14—20).

6. Write short critical notes on the following :—(a) The Freedom of the Will. (b) The Paradox of Hedonism. (c) Evolution and its application to Ethics. (For the answer of (a) see Bk. II, pp. 191—200; for that of (b), p. 40; for that of (c), pp. 90—92).

1912.

1. Briefly indicate the main psychological questions that have a bearing upon ethical problems. Explain the relation

between the two. (For answer see Bk. I, p. 13, pp. 17—18, and pp. 47—49).

2. Fully elucidate what you consider to be the sound view about conscience. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 161—64).

3. Discuss Mill's answers to the following objections to Utilitarianism :—(a) Pleasure is a mean and grovelling object of pursuit. (b) Happiness is a thing unattainable, and renunciation is the first condition of all nobleness of character.

4. What, according to Utilitarianism, is the Internal Sanction of Morality? Fully describe its nature. Is Utilitarianism justified in setting up such a sanction? (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 60—61, and pp. 65—69).

5. Reproduce, with brief comments, Martineau's ethical classification of the springs of action. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 111—15).

6. What explanation is given by Evolutional Hedonism of—(a) the sense of moral obligation; (b) the relation between Egoism and Altruism? (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 101—105, and pp. 105—109).

7. Give a critical exposition of the characteristic historical forms of Extreme Rationalism. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 14—20).

8. Define Personality; and give a simple exposition of the Ethics of Personality. (For answer see Bk. II, Chap. vi).

9. Write an illustrative and expository note on the following: A manifestation of the law of moral progress is found in the gradual subordination of the sterner to the gentler virtues. (For answer see Bk. III. pp. 253—54).

### 1913.

1. Write short notes on any five of the following :—The Normative sciences, The relation between virtue and knowledge, Casuistry, The paradox of Hedonism, Bentham's Sanc-

tions of Morality, The "Characteristics" of Shaftesbury, Aristotle's definition of Virtue. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 6—9; Bk. III, pp. 100—101; Bk. III, pp. 92—96; Bk. II, p. 40; Bk. II, pp. 58—61; Bk. I, pp. 124—25; Bk. III, pp. 111—13).

2. Write notes, explanatory or critical, on any three of the following statements:—(a) It is curious that psychological ethics are altogether peculiar to Christendom. (b) No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. (c) Revenge is a kind of wild justice. (d) He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need to do so because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god. (e) Act only on that maxim which thou canst at the same time will to become a universal law. (For the answer of (b), see Bk. II, pp. 57, 64; of (d), see Bk. III, Chap. I; of (e), see Bk. II, pp. 16, 18—20).

3. Illustrate the close relation between the sciences of Ethics and Politics in Greek thought. In what ways has the modern wider conception of the State influenced ethical thought? (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 184—89).

4. Is it possible to justify the infliction of punishment on ethical grounds? (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 215—25, particularly pp. 223—25).

5. "There is nothing just or unjust which does not change its quality with a change of climate. Three degrees of latitude overturn the whole science of law." (Pascal). To what extent is morality absolute and independent of the environment? (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 52—55, and also pp. 106—110).

6. Indicate some of the chief directions which ethical thought has followed in England since the middle of the

nineteenth century. (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 55-57; pp. 79-81, 85-86; pp. 90-92; pp. 121-33; pp. 139-49).

7. Give a brief historical account of the development of Utilitarian Hedonism in England. (For answer see Bk. II, Chaps. IV and V).

8. Is it possible to classify the virtues? What principles must be followed in attempting such a task? How far is the Platonic classification suitable to the circumstances of modern times? (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 113-17; and p. 148).

9. Examine the part played by custom in the development of the moral life of (a) an individual, (b) a people. In what degree is the law, whether customary or written, of a people a reliable indication of its moral outlook? (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 107-10).

10. Examine J. S. Mill's account of the connection between justice and utility.

### 1914.

1. What do you consider to be the *practical* value of the study of Ethics? Discuss briefly the view that Ethics must either be based on or perfect itself in Religion. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 13-15, and pp. 28-31).

2. A modern writer has said that 'The origin and end of all philosophy is to be sought in Ethics.' Explain and discuss this statement. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 26-28).

3. Write short critical notes on any *two* of the following subjects:—(a) Teleological Ethics, (b) Intuitionism, (c) Universalistic Hedonism, and its compatibility with Egoistic Hedonism. (For answer see Bk. II, chap. vi; chap. I, pp. 3-4; and chap. IV, pp. 56-79).

4. What do you consider to be the proper Object of the Moral Judgment? Give a reasoned answer. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 106-119).

5. Discuss the question as to how far Hedonism in any of its forms can be regarded as furnishing an adequate basis for moral obligation. (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 58-62).

6. Discuss the relation of conscience to the Social System. (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 22-24).

7. State the problem raised by the apparently conflicting claims of Individualism and Socialism, and indicate the lines on which you would attempt solution of its difficulties. (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 1-12).

8. Consider the relative claims of (a) The Ascetic Life ; (b) The contemplative Life ; (c) The Active Life, to be regarded respectively as the Ethical Ideal, in so far as they may be distinguished from each other. (For answer see Bk. III, chap. viii, § III,—a).

9. Explain the moral significance of the following sayings : (a) 'Know thyself,' (b) 'Be a person,' (c) 'Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.' (For answer see Bk. II, chap. vi).

### 1915.

1. Discuss the question whether the Good or the Right constitutes the fundamental notion of Ethics." (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 86-102).

Or.

Explain and illustrate the relation of Ethics to Sociology and Politics. Examine the view that Ethics is merely a branch of Sociology. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 19-26).

2. Discuss the nature of Instinct. Distinguish between Desire and Motive, Motive and Intention. Determine the meaning of Motive in Ethics. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 61-70).

Or.

Classify the Springs of Action and determine their mutual relations. On what grounds is superiority claimed for the Judgments of Duty? (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 111-14).

3. Show how the question as to the nature of the Ethical End is connected with the question as to the true nature of the Self. (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 47-49, and p. 35).

4. What is the meaning of Kant's dictum 'you ought and therefore you can'? It has been said that the idea of Self-determination combines the Libertarian and the Determinist theory. Examine this statement. (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 186-200).

5. Dwell on the following points: (a) the relation conceived to exist between the individual and society; (b) the facts supporting this conception; (c) the sense in which the end is to be regarded as a personal one. (For answer see Bk. III, pp. 1-12).

6. Outline the leading feature of Intuitionism as an ethical theory, noticing the difficulties alleged to be involved in it. (For answer see Bk. II, pp. 3-14).

Or.

What account does Evolutionary theory as applied to Ethics give of the genesis of Conscience? Do you think it possible to conserve the objective character of the authority of Conscience on the basis of this theory? (For answer see Bk. I, pp. 154-56 and pp. 160-61; see also Bk. II, pp. 101-105, pp. 116-19).

7. Fully expound the moral theory according to which the highest good lies in the realization of the highest self. (For answer see Bk. II, chap. vi).



Or.

‘Each of the various ethical theories has contributed some valuable element to the whole of Ethical Thought.’ Discuss this statement. (This is a general question which may be answered from the general knowledge of the different standards dealt with in Bk. II, chaps i-vi).





